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SPORTS ARTICLES REPRINT SERIES

Selected Fencing Articles

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Preface

Excellent articles dealing with various aspects of the sport of fencing have appeared in DGWS *Fencing Guides;* unfortunately, most of these articles are not easily available. This first edition of *Selected Fencing Articles* has been prepared to make these outstanding articles available to those interested in fencing. A few of the articles appeared originally in the *Second National Institute on Girls Sports.* This is the latest in the DGWS Sports Articles Reprint Series.

The articles, which were carefully selected for their potential value to students, coaches, and teachers, are representative of the sport today. The material covers: theory and methods of teaching and coaching; techniques and skills; methods of evaluation, officiating, intramural and extramural activities, and resources.

Hopefully, this publication will prove valuable, interesting, and challenging to all participants and followers of one of the world's most fascinating sports.

Myrtis E. Herndon
Editor

Introduction

Touché! Education Through Fencing

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Education is charged with grave and far-reaching responsibilities, and rightly so, for it is concerned primarily with the development of persons who, in turn, shape the society in which we live. In every period of crisis or change, the prevailing system of education is challenged, therefore, and a re-examination of its basic objectives as well as of the specific media for their realization is undertaken generally. Earnest high school and college faculties are engaged in this process of determining toward what ends they are teaching and of selecting those media in terms of subject matter, experiences, methods of organization and approach, et cetera, most likely to result in the ends sought.

Those engaged in the particular area of physical education are concerned, therefore, with a re-examination of their programs with respect to the specific contributions to the development of educated individuals that may be achieved through this area. In the realm of sports for girls and women, objectives have been scrutinized and restated from time to time with certain basic objectives re-emphasized because they are thoroughly sound. Translated into activities conducive to their realization, they have focussed attention upon those sports activities that contribute to the development of bodies that are both attractive and fit in terms of such fitness objectives as endurance, strength, flexibility, body control, balance, coordination, relaxation and morale with implications for living which is effective and happy because it includes in its daily pattern not only efficiency in work but also a sense of happy fulfillment in play with members of one's own and the opposite sex.

To particularize, how does fencing as an important activity in the sports program for girls and women contribute to the fundamental purpose of education – the development of better persons with minds, bodies and spirits thoroughly developed and completely co-ordinated into the perfect whole?

In the first place, fencing is one of the oldest of our sports. Traditionally, it brings to the physical education curriculum, therefore, a background which is rich and fascinating in historical significance because its development is closely interwoven with the ideologies and customs of peoples of all times and places. When a

knowledge of the evolution of the sport of fencing from primitive to modern times is taught along with the techniques and skills of bouting, a better understanding of various periods and phases of history and civilization may be readily acquired.[1] The function of the antecedents of the modern sport in warfare, its role in the colorful days of chivalry and knighthood, its sponsorship by the nobility in the courts of various European countries, its inspiration or impetus to the arts of literature, sculpture and painting – these are indeed knowledges compatible with an education and more easily activated in conjunction with a mastery of the sport itself. Many a student of fencing has participated more fully than the non-fencer in reading or in observing Shakespeare's plays with their many references and passages devoted to the art of fencing. These are scarcely comprehensible to those unacquainted with the sport and much of the wit and subtle allusions are thus lost. For example, Mercutio's dying soliloquy after his duel with Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet* is considered by dramatists a highlight in the play with its disparaging references to Tybalt's fencing methods as those of a braggart who "fights by the books of arithmetic."

In the second place, fencing contributes to the fundamental purpose of education in that it fosters the development of a mental pattern which enables the devotee to appraise situations quickly and to reach them effectively. It entails the skill of making rapid decisions based upon a quick but conclusive comprehension of all the factors involved. It necessitates the so-called split-second timing in the thinking and acting process which a skillful fencer coordinates perfectly with her movements of mind, arms, legs and body as a whole. While there is no guarantee that the mental alertness and facility of subsequent action demanded in fencing *automatically* carries over into other life situations, there is reason to believe that habitual patterns of such coordinated mental and physical effort tend to function in other situations demanding similar quick reactions. Fencing is not a game of brute force. Rather, it is a sport of skill and dexterity demanding the keenest of intellectual acumen for those who master its techniques.

In the third place, fencing contributes unquestionably to the development of bodies that are attractive in terms of line and proportion and physically fit in terms of endurance, strength, flexibility, control, balance and coordination. It affords a form of

[1] Good historical surveys appear in *The Art of the Foil* by Luigi Barbasetti, E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., New York; *Encyclopedia of Sports* by Frank G. Menke, A. S. Barnes and Company, New York; *The Theory and Practice of Fencing* by Julio Martinez-Castello, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York; and numerous encyclopedias including the *Encyclopedia Brittanica*.

physical exercise that not only benefits the body as a whole but one that yields particular strength to arms, shoulder girdle, abdomen, thighs and legs through the rapid extensions and contractions of muscles involved in its various techniques of attack and defense. Prerequisite to prowess in this particular sport is an unwavering focus and concentration of eyes and mind upon an opponent's target and upon every movement of her foil and body. Subsequent trigger-speed movements of fingers, wrists, arms, legs and body as a whole in various lightning-like combinations of attacks and parries involving lunges, thrusts, advances, retreats, ripostes and counter ripostes are unparalleled for their development of eye-hand, eye-arm, arm-leg and other coordinations of various parts of the body as well as of the body as a whole. A good fencer's flexibility is obviously measurable in terms of the length of her lunge and recovery to the guard position as well as in the speedy extension of her thrust and immediate counter-parry if a touch is not achieved. Balance is a premium in fencing because it is the only sports activity which fails to utilize the natural law of opposition facilitating easy balance in its various techniques. In order to present the smallest touching surface possible for an opponent's attack, the fencer must develop her sense of balance in all techniques with a stride and a coordination of arms and legs that are unilateral rather than opposite. Fencing promotes good posture in that it emphasizes erectness of head and chest with essential relaxation of shoulders to avoid tension and undue fatigue, proper alignment of hips, back and abdomen to insure agility and coordination in attack and defense, and correct distribution of weight upon the outer borders of the feet with knees over arches in the guard position. The emphasis upon form and ceremony and the traditional romantic associations of pride, valor and nobility inextricably linked with the art of fencing are further incentives for the development and maintenance of good postures on the part of those who seek superiority in this skill. For those who achieve it, there accrues a sensitivity to and a feeling for beauty of line in movement.

Finally, fencing contributes to the fundamental purpose of education in that it fosters a courage and a tenacity of spirits – an essential sort of morale – developed in hand-to-hand combat. Great emphasis has been placed upon combative activities in the development of morale for civilians as well as for those in the armed forces and both West Point and Annapolis have stressed fencing in their curriculums of physical education for potential officers – along with football, boxing and wrestling – for many years. Fencing is the only combative activity that is physiologically sound for girls and women and merits its place, therefore, in every sports program for the particular attributes that it thus engenders. Since it is a combative

sport based upon skill and dexterity rather than force and strength of bodily contact, it is readily adaptable to co-educational and co-recreational programs of physical education. In other words, it is one of the relatively few sports in which boys and girls may compete with impunity and at the same time bring mixed groups together in a wholesome situation conducive to normal adjustment between the two sexes. It is ideal as a recreational activity in that one companion makes satisfying indulgence possible and a real devotee enjoys developing her skill and accuracy in leisure hours against a canvas target when a human opponent is unavailable.

In high schools and liberal arts colleges with well-rounded curriculum, fencing holds a strategic place in the sports offering. While it affords all the physiological benefits of wholesome exercise, it also has a special appeal for the student who is primarily interested in music, drama, art, literature and dance. Very often this student is somewhat sophisticated in her attitude and not tempted, therefore, to race up and down a hockey field, stick in hand, or to make the rounds of the bases on a softball diamond for a dramatic slide into the home-plate. Because of its romantic and historical background as well as its direct and obvious carry-over into art, drama, opera, et cetera, this particular type of student displays a state of readiness conducive to daily practice and ultimate mastery of the sport. For her, the art and practice of fencing coincides literally as well as figuratively with that skill and debate in repartee epitomized by the *touchés* of sophisticated drawing-room conversations. She is further motivated by the fact that fencing is an integral part of the training advocated for aspiring young singers, dancers and actresses.

While fencing has grown increasingly popular in the sports programs of schools and colleges, it is destined to become even more so in the future due to the realization of its many contributions to the fitness objectives now generally recognized and to its unique potential contributions to an education. It is the responsibility of teachers to see that the impetus thus provided results in sufficient time allotment, equipment and facilities for fencing along with other important physical education activities in the school curriculum. Ideally, the class in fencing should meet daily in gymnasium or studio with equipment sufficient for the members enrolled. While a good teacher can adapt her methods to group instruction, a certain amount of individual attention for checking form and techniques is essential. For this reason, fencing classes – like those in golf – should be kept to a desirable maximum of not more than 24 to 30 students, if possible. Students working in pairs can be taught to check each other's execution of basic techniques such as the lunge and thrust with recovery to guard position, and mirrors in the studio or gymnasium will afford an excellent means of self-correction.

While fencing is a relatively expensive individual sport necessitating the provision of a mask, plastron and foil for each student enrolled in a class, teachers convinced in its contributions to the goals of education are justified in seeking expanded budgets which permit its inclusion in the curriculum. Good equipment that is properly cared for is durable and proves a long-term investment. Foils with detachable blades permit the replacement of occasionally broken blades at a relatively low cost. Proper provision should be made in the form of cabinets for the suspension of foils when not in use with sufficient space for the careful putting away of plastrons and masks. Needless to add, students should be taught the importance of proper care of fencing equipment; a genuine love of the sport will often preclude any possible abuse of equipment necessary to its pursuit. Good fencing equipment may be procured from any number of reputable sporting goods houses.

Fencing possesses so many inherent satisfactions that it almost supplies its own motivation upon initiation into the school curriculum. Not least of these is its combative quality, bringing to the individual a challenge and a thrilling excitement when facing a single opponent in hand-to-hand combat. Patterns for the satisfactions which result when an individual secures a touch upon her opponent or outwits her thrust with a successful parry were laid down in the neurons of our ancestors when primitive man first attacked an opponent singly, club in hand. Because these satisfactions are heightened in direct proportion with the increase of skill, however, fencing clubs should be a part of the regular intramural sports programs with bouts scheduled periodically between teams representing the various units comprising such programs. Demonstrations in school assemblies, an occasional "open-house" combining social opportunities with demonstrations and bouts are also effective in extending an interest in fencing. May we hear more and more calls of *"Touché"* as an increasing number of young women engage in fencing and thus *practice* the sportsmanship which we *preach* by the traditional custom of acknowledging with admiration the successful point scored by the opponents whom they are facing. Education through fencing? *Touché!*

Teaching and Coaching

Don't Let Fencing Foil You!

MAXINE MURI MILLER

What is a strip? That battleground of wits and skill, speed and dexterity, precision, perfect timing, good judgment, healthy determination to win! Every high school and college student recognizes at once a basketball floor, a tennis court, a bowling alley, and is familiar as a part-time participant, at least, with the activities performed thereon. But what is a fencing strip?

Fencing in the Curriculum

Instructors who have included fencing in the physical education program in high schools and colleges have provided a sport which combines all of the elements which educators seek in the motor-improvement of their students. Fencing stands well against the most critical examination of its merit, and justifies itself in all lights.

When considering an activity for inclusion in the physical education curriculum, what factors do we use as a basis for decision for or against the activity? We may make a careful analysis of the merit of the activity in satisfying our most far-reaching objectives; we may make sample tests to rate the activity, asking:

(1) Does it provide big-muscle activity?
(2) Does it contribute to the development of body control?
(3) Does it contribute to improvement of co-ordination?
(4) Does it improve the sense of timing?
(5) Does it improve judgment?
(6) Can the student of medium or poor co-ordination find satisfaction in accomplishment?
(7) Does it involve elements of self-control?
(8) Does it enhance good sportsmanship?
(9) Is it applicable to medium-size or large classes?
(10) Is it adaptable to all students?
(11) Does it provide worthwhile competition?
(12) Does it provide opportunity for self-testing?
(13) Is it satisfying to the participant?
(14) Does it provide carry-over into later life?

Fencing answers the test on every count! It provides, through techniques such as the thrust, lunge, and jump-lunge, big-muscle activity for legs, trunk, and shoulder-girdle. It rivals the dance in the development of body control. Its opportunities for the increase of

coordination, timing, and judgment of distance are unlimited. It provides the finest motivation for the learning of specific techniques which can be progressively included in the sport, and which add in a measurable way to the improvement of skill directly related to the sport, as in bouting.

An Ideal Individual Sport

Any normal, healthy girl can fence! A girl who has never found satisfaction in team sports may realize in fencing an activity in which she can find herself, with a reasonable amount of practice, among the best in her group. She may easily master the techniques necessary to the sport, and can, at her own rate of speed, incorporate these into hand-to-hand combat which provides exhilaration and develops a will to win which is unparalleled in the individual sports area.

The fencer will find satisfaction through successful manipulation of body and foil in response to definite purpose-planning, calling for split-second responses, rapid changes of pace, perfect body control. She will find joy in the accomplishment of successful maneuvers resulting in personal achievement against an adversary. She will find self-motivation toward further practice of individual skills which will increase the over-all skill of the fencer.

Fencing is surrounded by the spirit of clean sportsmanship; it enhances honest effort to accomplish skill in an attempt to outwit an opponent. It demands critical analysis of movement by the fencer herself, who is self-testing during every encounter on the strip.

Beginners' Problems

The teacher of physical education will find that the beginning class in fencing is completely homogeneous as to background. In many sports which are included in the majority of grade school, high school, and college programs, a "beginning class" may include girls who have never been exposed to the activity; those who have had a little experience with the skills involved; some who have had considerable experience in the playing of the game. Within the group are some with excellent body control, good coordination, and ease in movement; others whose movement is awkward and limited. The teacher is faced with a dual program; she must first teach the ability to move freely and in co-ordinated manner and then teach the skills of the sport.

The beginning student of fencing is typically lacking in a good sense of timing as related to fencing skills; she is lacking the ability to move in purposeful and co-ordinated manner. She is fearful of hand-to-hand combat, slow in reaction time, disinterested in

"technique for technique's sake," unable to judge distance, unable to translate isolated techniques into movement patterns, lacking in aggressiveness, and timid to exhibit a lack of natural ability.

Fencing Classes

A typical, mixed-motor-ability group of college students can learn to fence reasonably well in 15 class periods. These class periods should be devoted to the mastery, in reasonable degree, of specific techniques, an understanding of the rules of fencing, a development of techniques into movement-patterns which involve practice with an adversary, and finally, opportunity to fence in the bout.

Although there is a good argument against early bouting for beginning fencers, who relinquish good form in favor of "winning the touch," there should and can be developed a sufficient amount of sound technique before bouting is begun to make the continued practice of the best technique a necessity. When movement-patterns accompany the learning of new techniques, the student of fencing finds herself almost from the outset in a game-situation.

When a new technique is presented to the class, it should be introduced in its final form. For example, the parry carte should be learned and practiced as a defense against the thrust in carte. The disengage should be taught and practiced in combination with the counter-parry. The thrust and lunge should be practiced against the target of the opponent, to include in the learning of the thrust and lunge accuracy in the judgment of distance and aim. Quick reaction time becomes a necessity in the movement pattern; good results demand complete familiarity with specific technique in order that the pattern of movement *becomes* the technique.

In the accompanying chart is a series of lessons in beginning fencing which include only certain elementary techniques directed toward the bout. The emphasis in this series is on the learning of patterns involving one or more techniques so that the eventual bouting is recognized as a continuation and improvement of elementary work involving elements which have been practiced in their final form from the moment of the first, hesitant assumption of the "on-guard" position.

Fencing costs no more than other activities which are included in most Physical Education curricula. School-owned equipment will insure enrollment in the sport and, with reasonable care, will last several years.

Fencing is an ideal sport for extra-curricular emphasis in clubs, intramural tournaments, and competition between schools. It has an appeal which is unquestioned, and adds to the all around development of the individual who must combine mental and physical prowess to reach the goal of *good fencing.*

Suggested Series of Lessons Directed Toward Bouting

Lesson	Daily Techniques	Class Formation	Movement Patterns	Concomitants (Preparing for Bout)
1.	(a) On guard position (b) Salute (c) Advance (d) Retreat (e) Equipment	Single line drill	Single skill drill only	Development of precision, maintenance of position, correct posture, balance
2.	(a) Review on guard, advance, retreat (b) Thrust (c) Lunge	(a) Single line drill (b) Double line drill (c) Double line drill	1. Thrust, lunge 2. Thrust, lunge against opponent's target 3. Advance, thrust, lunge	Development of aim. Accent on judging distance while in motion.
3.	(a) Review above (b) Parry carte (c) Riposte	(a) Line drill (b) (single, then (c) double)	1. Thrust, lunge 2. Parry carte, riposte, retreat	Re-emphasis on aim and judging distance. Ability to parry in lunge position.
4.	(a) Review above (b) Parry sixte, riposte	(a) Double line drill (b) Double line drill	1. Advance, thrust, lunge 2. Parry sixte, riposte, retreat	As above Rapid riposte
5.	(a) Review above	(a) Double line drill	1. Advance, thrust, lunge, parry, riposte, parry, riposte, retreat	Emphasis on replacement attack.
6.	(a) Review above (b) Jump lunge	(a) Double line drill (b) Single line drill	1. Jump lunge attack, parry, riposte, parry riposte, retreat	Emphasis on covering distance, maintaining balance.
7.	(a) Review above (b) Disengage	(a) Double line drill (b) Double line drill	1. Advance, thrust, lunge, 1-2 attack from carte to sixte, parry, 1-2 replacement, etc.	Emphasis on use of disengage to outwit opponent. Stress blade in motion.

Suggested Series of Lessons Directed Toward Bouting—Continued

Lesson	Daily Techniques	Class Formation	Movement Patterns	Concomitants (Preparing for Bout)
8.	(a) Review above (b) Counter-parry	(a) Double line drill (b) Double line drill	1. Receiving 1-2 attack using counter parry, riposte, etc.	Emphasis on good use of counter parry and riposte
9.	(a) Review above (b) Beat, bind	(a) Double line drill (b) Double line drill	1. As in lesson 1-8 (cumulative) 2. Use of beat, bind inserted in pattern	Careful, accurate aim; quick riposte; aggressiveness on disengage.
10.	(a) Review above (lesson 8-9) (b) Seconde parry (c) Septime parry	Double line drill	Lunge, attack in seconde, parry, riposte. Jump lunge attack in septime Parry, riposte	Correct use of low line attacks. Proper riposte Proper replacement
11.	(a) Review above	Double line (partner) informal	Pattern initiated by one fencer, fence to the touch	Emphasis on aggression Strong parries
12, 13, 14.	Procedures in bouting	**2 strips in use fencers in pools**	**Practical applications**	**Emphasis on aggression Strong parries**
15.	Class round-robin tournament	2 strips in use fencers in pools	Practical applications	Emphasis on rules, procedure. Re-emphasis on good technique. Development of determination.

The Elementary Foil Course in the Physical Education Curriculum

JOSEPH A. MASTROPAOLO
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Foil play can be a favorite recreation during and after school years. The opportunities to fence can be many. Since only two are required to play, the players may be of the same or opposite sex, and the sport may be enjoyed in a relatively small space with inexpensive facilities. In addition, fencing may be pursued as an excellent physical conditioner with opportunities for individual and team competition at many levels of proficiency. The subtleties of "the noble art" have attracted, down through the centuries, those seeking an intellectual as well as an athletic challenge. If one considers an activity desirable to the extent that it is versatile in the achievement of the worthwhile objectives of physical education, then fencing should be considered a valuable area of learning.

The foil fencing course should provide sufficient activity to develop in each student a high degree of physical fitness. This implies a maximum of vigorous, total-class participation. In order to make the activity interesting, and in order that learning may be motivated, the lessons should be centered around the most pertinent of achievable aims. Class organization should permit the optimum operation of these aims.

The single-row formation is convenient for the warm-up; the paried, double-row formation is convenient for review, for learning new skills, and for fencing. The warm-up should be effected with fencing fundamentals and without equipment. If little correction is needed during the review, the cadence may be increased to achieve greater physical conditioning. New skills may be presented by explanation, demonstration, and the part-whole method.* The fencing may be organized as a ladder tournament with a three-touch, or one-minute, time limit for each bout. At times, half-speed fencing may be desirable to encourage proper execution of the newer skills, longer phrasing, fuller lunging, delayed parrying, or immediate riposting.

*Roger Crosnier, *Fencing with the Foil.* London: Faber and Faber, 1951; p. 19. New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, 1948.

The first meeting with the class is often spent in attending to certain administrative details. In addition, some time may be spent explaining equipment, safety measures, and the organization of the course. The foil and spare blade, mask, and fencing jacket are usually considered minimum equipment requirements. Shorts, divided skirts, or trousers should furnish protection at least as low as the knee and at least five inches above the lower border of the fencing jacket. A glove may be improvised but should cover the opening to the sleeve. Tennis shoes provide adequate footgear. The uniform is usually white.

Fencing accidents are rare because the following safety rules are strictly enforced: The donning of the mask always precedes the use of the foil. The foil button must have a protective covering, the foil blade must be curved slightly downward, and a martingale must insure the attachment of the foil to the fencer's hand. As soon as striking has been taught, the fencer must learn to give way upward at the wrist and shoulder to avoid breaking the blade when distances are unexpectedly shortened.

The second class meeting should mark the beginning of instruction in fundamentals and tactics. Soon afterward, a start should be made in fencing and officiating. Sportsmanship should be taught to insure the courteous atmosphere meant to be observed between the traditional salute which starts the fencing bout and the traditional salute and handshake which end it.

The fundamentals that may be included in the elementary foil course are: the preparatory position to the salute; the salute; the on-guard; the two appeals and reassembly; the advance; the retreat; the lunge and straight attack; the recovery from the lunge; the coupling of the lunge to the advance or to the retreat; the engagements of four and six; the changing of the engagement; the parries of four and six and their counter-parries; the attacks by disengage, cut-over, and counter-disengage and their combination; the immediate repostes by straight thrust, disengage, cut-over, and counter-disengage and their combination with the lunge; the preparations for the attack by beat, change-beat, pressure, and bind.

Tactical theory should be taught with the skill. The advantages of an on-guard with one line closed should be understood. When fencers engage blades they should realize that at least one of them is uncovered in the line of the engagement. If the adversary can be uncovered in the line of the engagement, he may be touched by a direct attack if this attack is launched as the line is being opened. In fact, the ideal line to attack is not the one that is open but rather, the one that is opening. The fencer should be taught to find the predictable event and to turn this event to advantage. At the same time, he should learn to vary his own strokes.

The nature of the fencing bout may be quite different from class instruction for the adversary is no longer cooperative nor may he be as predictable. It is important that the fencer experience these differences early, and that he look upon each fencing bout as a lesson. The purposes of each of these lessons will be more understandable if the fencer sharpens his powers of observation to implement the analytical habit. Only from a sound understanding of the fencing bout can valid and reliable answers be found to build not only the good fencer but also the competent official.

The primary official, the director, or president, of the jury, must conduct himself, during the fencing bout, with at least as much skill and decision as the contestants. The director is responsible for conducting the fencing bout so that the true score of the encounter will be recorded. In his charge are the fencers and the judges. In order to have recorded each touch, he must properly start and stop the contestants, reconstruct the pertinent events, interpret the rules, poll the jury, and vote. Like the fencers, the officials must study and practice to become consistently excellent, and must be introduced early to the peculiarities of the fencing bout. If the culminating activity of the elementary foil course is a class or interclass tournament, then the class members should recognize that the realization of the tournament will involve a minimum of one and a half officials per contestant or, more ideally, two and a half officials per contestant for each fencing bout.

The lessons may be arranged in the form of units. A unit is designed to treat an area of instruction rather than a given time interval. Some examples of units for an elementary foil course follow.

Unit I. The aim is to learn the parts of the foil, the starting position (on guard), the etiquette of the foil bout, and the extent of the valid target. The length of the foil must be less than forty-three and one-quarter inches and the length of the foil blade must be less than thirty-five and three-eighths inches. The blunted extremity of the foil blade is called the button and may be covered with narrow strips of adhesive tape. Proceeding from the button, the first third of the blade is called the weak; the second third, the medium; and the last third, the strong. The tang of the blade passes through the guard and handle. The pommel serves to hold together and to give proper balance to the foil. The foil is held with the second phalanx of the index finger close to the guard underneath, with the thumb extended above, and with the other fingers joined and coiled about the handle. The foil, hand, and forearm are aligned. The preparatory position for the salute is taken when the fencer presents himself on the strip for a fencing bout. This is an erect position with the feet at

right angles, heels touching, and the foil and forearm and arm are aligned with the point of the foil in front and about ten inches from the strip. The mask is held erect at the side by the rear hand. When the director calls, "On guard", the fencer should salute his adversary by bringing the guard of the foil beneath the chin, the blade and forearm vertical, and the palm toward the neck. The second count of the salute is executed by turning the palm away from the neck and briskly whipping the foil to the preparatory position for the salute. When the director calls "Ready?", the fencer should don his mask, take the on guard, and reply, "Ready." When the last touch has been scored the fencer returns to the on guard, gives two appeals (two taps) with the forward foot and reassembles. The reassembly is like the preparatory position to the salute except that the mask is on, and the foil, forearm, and arm are aligned about 60 degrees above the horizontal. Next the mask is removed with the rear hand, the fencer salutes the adversary, the director and jury, places his foil in the hand that holds his mask, and steps forward to shake his adversary's hand. A sequence may be practiced by giving instructions such as prepare to salute, salute, on guard, two appeals, reassemble, salute.

The foil target for ladies extends from the top of the collar to a horizontal line passing acorss the tops of the hip bones. The target excludes the arms up to the shoulders. It includes the bib of the mask.

Unit II. The aim of the second unit is to practice taking the on guard and to learn the advance and the retreat. The class should be given practice in taking the on guard decisively in one count. Some time should be spent indicating the purpose of the on guard, the position from which the fencer must be prepared to launch most effectively movements which are preparatory or which are immediately offensive or defensive. Perfection of the on guard is the perfection of the basis of most fencing movements. After the advance and retreat are taught, practice should be given in various combinations of advances and retreats with frequent evaluations of the on guard after any sequence.

Unit III. The aim of this unit is to learn to strike the target with the foil. The Class may be arranged in pairs in two rows, one called **A** and one **B**. The distance between pairs for the first part of this unit should be such that **A** can touch **B** merely by extending the foil arm. The foil point should be directed to target level by the thumb and the index finger. This may be called aiming. Then the foil arm should be extended and the foil point should strike the target at the point of aim. This second movement may be called striking.

Subsequent practice may be given first by the instructions "Aim," and "Strike," then just by the instruction "Strike." Striking the adversary's target merely by extending the foil arm is most common as a riposte. The instructor should keep in mind that since the attack usually terminates with the lunge, the target for the riposte will be lower than the target of the fencer on guard. Therefore, after lunging has been taught, the riposte situation should be reconstructed with the offensive fencers in the lunge.

Extending the foil arm, as in striking from arm's length, is part of the movement called the lunge, the next movement studied in the striking progression. The rest of the lunge involves extending the rear lower limb, extending and lowering the rear upper limb, and displacing forward the forward lower limb. At first, the students may be instructed to remain in the lunge so that their form may be corrected by the instructor. When this is no longer important, the students should be instructed to begin the recovery from the lunge as soon as the forward foot makes contact with the ground. The beginner should practice returning quickly to the on guard in order that he may have, subsequently, the widest choice and best execution of fencing movements.

Unit IV. The aim of this unit is to learn the purposes and uses of the engagement and the parry. The concepts of basic offense and basic defense are built in this unit. The engagement should be defined as the contact of the fencer's blade with his adversary's blade, or the act of making such contact. The paramount observation should be that, when engaged, at least one fencer's target is uncovered in the line of the engagement. In other words, if the fencer, who is uncovered in the line of the engagement, does not adjust, he may be struck by an adversary who merely utilizes the simple lunge to attack. The same is true if the fencer is covered but then becomes uncovered as his adversary covers. In either event, the adjustment is merely to cover the line of the engagement as the adversary lunges, thus deflecting the threatening foil point from the target. Thus, we match the simplest parry against the simplest attack. However, when the class is organized for practice, one may find that a good procedure is to advise the parrying fencer not to parry once in a while, and to notice whether the attack scores on the target. Parry practice is valuable only against attacks that are meant to score.

Unit V. The aim of this unit is to learn the purpose and technique of reposting. The riposte is the offensive movement that follows a parry. The student should understand that, once under attack, the riposte is usually the first opportunity to score. The grave mistake

common to beginners is to parry and not to riposte immediately. This mistake encourages multiple renewals of the offensive on the part of the adversary, in turn forcing multiple parrying on the part of the beginner; and the game loses its intended nature of linking offensive units to defensive and counter-offensive units. The attacker should be advised to remain in the covered position from which the attack began and that no adjustment should be made, once his adversary has parried. This permits unobstructed riposting and will be helpful to the attacker, too, since upon being parried there will be one obvious and most direct avenue for the riposte. He should learn early that a situation which can be anticipated with high reliability can be turned to scoring advantage.

At first, the attacker should remain in the lunge so that the defender's riposte may be practiced merely by extending the foil arm. Later, the attacker should practice a quick return to the on guard so that the riposte must be given with the lunge. To train the proper sequence of movement for the riposte subsequent practice may be organized so that the attacker will choose at random either to remain in the lunge or to return quickly to the on guard. Those who begin the reposte with the lower limbs instead of the foil arm will soon disclose this fault.

Unit VI. The aim of this unit is to learn the strategy and execution of other simple attacks and parries. To uncover the adversary and to attack in the line in which engaged is too simple a strategem to succeed very often. The adversary's inclination to cover again the line uncovered provides him with too natural and too fast a response. Yet, this response to cover again can be turned to advantage by disengaging or by cutting-over away from the line that is closing to the line that is opening. To bolster the defense against the developing offensive, the fencer should be taught at least the straight and circular parries of four and six. The defender may add even more variety to his defense by learning to parry at the last instant as well as immediately. The attacker may be given more latitude to prepare his attack by learning the change of engagement, which uncovers the adversary without pushing on his blade. If the defender continually replies by changing the engagement again, then the attacker may turn this habit to advantage by following his next change of engagement with a counter-disengage. Variety may be added by practicing these attacks and parries after an advance or a retreat. In addition, combative exercises and fencing should be initiated during this unit to perfect the attacks, parries and ripostes under game conditions.

Unit VII. The aim of this unit is to learn the purpose and technique of the indirect riposte. The strategy for the riposte by

disengage, cut-over, or counter-disengage is the same as for the attack with these movements. The offensive in the line of the engagement is too easily anticipated. Learning to riposte indirectly at arm's length can be facilitated by instructing the students to move the point of the foil before the foil arm begins to extend. The riposte by lunging may be executed like the attack by lunging.

Unit VIII. The aim of this unit is to learn the purpose and technique of compound attacks. The fencer should understand that the purpose of the compound attack is to gain time while penetrating the adversary's defenses. In other words, if the adversary parries so quickly that he cannot be hit with simple attacks, then he may be scored upon by deceiving his first parry with a compound attack. If the adversary can be touched with simple attacks, there is no need to employ compound attacks.

Compound attacks are not mastered easily by beginners. The difficulty is focused on the mastering of a convincing feint and on moving the foil point with precision at the instant of the anticipated parry. The concept of continual penetration can be given best by first introducing the double from the engagement of six or the one-two from the engagement of four. The double from the engagement of four or the one-two from the engagement if six is of greater difficulty. If time and skill permit, compound attacks utilizing the cut-over may be taught. The scope of the defensive, in turn, may be augmented by recommending the use of straight and circular parries and otherwise avoiding any patterned defense.

Unit IX. The aim of this unit is to learn the purpose and technique of selected preparations for attack. The preparation for attack may be defined as any fencing movement which is not immediately offensive. In this category are included the advance, the feint, covering, and changing the engagement. To these skills the instructor may add the beat and change-beat, which prepare well against the fencer who *does not* firmly resist preparatory blade movements. The pressure prepares well against the fencer who *does* firmly resist preparatory blade movements. The bind prepares well against the adversary who threatens often with the foil arm extended.

Unit X. The aim of this unit is to learn fencing strategy and officiating skills. Each fencer gains bouting experience by opposing a variety of adversaries, and the beginner should be given the opportunity to develop his powers of judgment and opportuneness under diverse conditions. Thus, the impromptu ladder tournaments held during the last few minutes of class should serve many

purposes: they should provide for a large number of bouts of short duration; they should incite both instructor and students to further effort in more lessons and drill; and they should be a stimulating climax to the class activities.

A culminating activity which can furnish learning experience in strategy and in officiating is the class or interclass tournament. Time permitting, the round robin tournament is preferable since it will provide the greatest amount of such experience. In conjunction with the tournament, a system for rating officials is usually found helpful. The ratings tend to motivate the officials to greater proficiency which in turn expedites match play. This also serves to generate greater harmony and more enthusiasm. The culminating activity, in any case, should be the highlight of the course for promoting continued interest in the sport.

Beginning Fencing Methods

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Fencing with power, grace, and beauty is an art – and so is teaching which utilizes simple and interesting methods.

In a beginning fencing course, in which some of the objectives are skill, enjoyment, and recreational value, the instructor must add variety to each lesson in order to stimulate interest and increase the students' enjoyment of the sport. There are many ways in which this may be accomplished and at the same time improve skill.

Teaching Techniques

Start with a demonstration. Give one for each new group of students on either the first or second day of class. This enables the student to see the end result of drills and practice and know from the beginning what they are trying to accomplish. The demonstration should be performed by two women or a woman and a man so the students will get the idea of feminine grace and power.

Vary drills. For warm-up and footwork drills, use both linear and circular type formations. Organize students in three or four straight lines, all lines moving forward and backward in the same direction. Place students in stagger formation, making maximum use of floor space. Participants move forward or backward on command. Place students in a large circle, all move in toward the center and out again. Place students in two opposing straight lines with each student across the area from the opponent. Students move forward and backward toward and away from each other. In the above formation, number opposing lines numbers one and two. Give the commands to line number one; number two's must react with opposite drill. For example, if line number one is told to advance, number two's must retreat! This drill is not only stimulating and fun, but calls for quick thinking and is sure to provide a few laughs.

Teach bout procedure. Do this early and review parts of foil, grip, and on-guard position at the same time. Have students at opposite sides of area and directly across from opponent. Each pair of students will have its own "strip." Give the commands as if actually directing a bout of only two persons. Students will take the strip, salute, advance to center, come on guard at on-guard lines, step

back, and on the command "fence," will review parts of foil, grip, and check opponent's on-guard position.

Avoid grueling drills. Students can enjoy simple fencing with a minimum knowledge of attacks and defenses. Spice each day of class with a period of actual "fencing," using new material and all skills previously acquired.

Provide a question and answer period. Set aside few minutes of each class for this period. Some students may have questions they have not asked during drills or bouting. This also provides time for rest.

Give the students information about local fencing clubs, organizations, and tournaments. This points out the carry-over value of fencing and stimulates real interest. Interject interesting bits of historical background and customs.

Have a second demonstration. Do this during the third or fourth week of the class. Make this demonstration longer than the first one, and let it be performed by either men or women who are skilled. Demonstrating different types of weapons will be good to introduce at this time. Local organizations or experienced instructors may be interested in coming to the class, too. A good demonstration at this time increases interest, shows advanced skills and attacks, and emphasizes the art of fencing.

Provide practice with different opponents during line drills and bouts. One simple method is to let students bout in a line for a prescribed length of time, blow a whistle, and have one line move one space to the right. Students introduce themselves and go on guard with the new opponent.

Give students an opportunity to recognize good and poor form. Place them in groups of six or seven and let them rate each other in the lunge position and as they advance and retreat. Participants may simply correct each other's form or may use rating forms, with a ten-point scale. Items on the scale might include such check points as position of feet, position of legs, shoulder level, level of foil arm, and position of back arm during lunge. Check points on advance and retreat could include position of feet, distance of feet from each other, smoothness of movement, position of arms, and position of knees and of hips.

Get into the act. Occasionally being a part of a line and working with different students provides exercise and practice for the instructor, and is motivating and fun for the students.

Go into actual bouting procedures when students seem ready for it. In an eight-week class, this may be the fourth, fifth, or sixth week. In a semester class, the proper time for bouting may be anywhere from the eighth week to the twelfth. A class tournament at the end of the course is an excellent culminating activity.

Remember your attitude. The attitude of the instructor can contribute much toward making the class interesting, desirable, and worthwhile. Enthusiasm is contagious.

In summary, for skill, variety, and enjoyment, teach to the students' level of ability, and use ingenuity according to the needs of the class. Fencing can be a challenging experience for both students and instructor.

Some Points for Fencing Instructors

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Foil fencing instruction in high schools should not go beyond the basic techniques. This means that emphasis should be placed on the proper form and correct execution of basic moves. Once the correct moves are learned, other practice drills may be introduced to stimulate and maintain pupil interest while students practice the basic skills. The following are some of the drills which are of value in developing proper vision, timing, guesswork, and footwork.

Vision is the most important sense to the fencer, particularly at the beginning stages of learning. The fencer sees the movement of the tip of the opponent's blade and also the movements of the opponent's feet. In the former, he learns to react with the proper parries or counter actions, and in the latter, to obtain and keep the proper distance while fencing. Therefore, the field of vision must include the hand- and the footwork of the opponent simultaneously. Before learning the movements of the blade, the fencer must first learn to maintain the proper distances with the blades engaged. A drill for practicing the maintaining of distance has one fencer regulate the movement by advancing and retreating. The other fencer must make the appropriate moves (advance or retreat) to maintain distance without losing the engagement of blades. The drill should be performed slowly at first, then speeded up as fencers learn to react faster. At a more advanced level, both fencers are on their own, and each one must watch and react to the moves of the other fencer. Thus the fencer learns to move cautiously forward and to react quickly with a backward movement as the opponent advances.

In the above drills, *timing* should be involved from the beginning. While practicing the maintaining of distance, the fencer regulating the pace suddenly breaks the engagement of the blades. Immediately the opponent should seize the opportunity to hit with a thrust and a lunge.

A series of exercises may be used to develop the simultaneous use of the senses of *touch, vision,* and *timing.* First the instructor engages the pupil's blade, and after a few seconds he changes engagement to the opposite side of the blade. The pupil tries to avoid the change of engagement by making an evasive thrust. After the pupil has learned which way to move to make the evasive thrust, the instructor has the pupil close his eyes and try to make the evasive

thrust with eyes shut, relying only on the sense of touch in his foil hand. After learning to perform the exercise with the eyes shut, he again practices with the eyes open. The evasion of the change of engagement, using both the sense of touch and vision, should be easier. To develop this exercise further, the instructor can regulate distance and make a change of engagement at will. The pupil must then maintain distance as well as seize the proper moment for the evasive thrust. In another exercise the instructor can constantly change engagement, and the pupil must choose the one he wishes to avoid by making a lunge with an evasive thrust.

In defense of a parry-riposte, the above type of exercise can be used as follows: The pupil makes a disengage thrust of the instructor's sixte engagement; the instructor parries with counter sixte and ripostes either along the blade or with a disengage. The pupil reacts either by opposing the thrust in sixte or by parrying quarte (or octave). Now the instructor has the pupil close his eyes and try to find the proper parry using only his sense of touch (feeling the pressure on the blade or the break of engagement). The instructor then has the pupil practice again with the eyes open. The pupil should have more success with the parry.

Another exercise which helps to refine timing is as follows: The pupil holds his blade in line with the arm extended. The instructor tries to engage the blade first with simple, then later with semi-circular and circular movements. The pupil tries to move the tip of his blade (with the use of the thumb and forefinger) to the opposite side to avoid the engagement. After this can be performed well, the maintaining of distance can be added, and the pupil can lunge with an evasive thrust when he desires.

The *guesswork* involved in fencing can be introduced with a simple exercise. One fencer is the attacker, the other the defender. The defender is placed at the wall so that he cannot retreat. The fencers should be within good lunging distance. The defender engages the attacker's blade moving into sixte. The attacker may make a simple disengage or a one-two attack. If the defender guesses that the attack will be a disengage he parries quarte. If he guesses that the attack will be a one-two he stays in sixte thereby blocking the final move of the attack. The attacker executes five attacks and counts the hits, and the defender counts the number of successful parries. They then change places for another five attacks. The fencer with the higher score in the end wins. Each fencer tries to guess what his opponent will do and selects the best move accordingly.

The above exercises and drills will add color to the teaching of fencing, increase pupil interest, and act as an incentive for pupils to practice until they attain success in the exercises.

Suggestions for Group Instruction in Beginning Fencing

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The definition given in the "Encyclopedia of Sports" states that, "Fencing is an art and an education, a sport with a lure peculiarly its own. Backed by four centuries of tradition, idealized in prose and poetry, skill in swordsmanship is universally admired. Fencers exemplify a quality so few possess – poise" (Camillo Agrippa – 1553). Also, "Fencing always has been and always will be enjoyed by a highly intelligent minority; those possessing the moral courage, the self discipline, the quiet determination required to become proficient in a sport that calls for the highly perfected technique of the golfer, the explosive energy of a sprinter, and the split-second decisions demanded of the boxer and the tennis player. It demands greater powers of analysis than any other sport."

To the layman fencing seems to be complicated. It takes longer for the individual to reach the "playing stage" than in any other sport. If, however, we can get the student through the basic technique, developing the correct habit patterns (based on the principles of physics), we can offer a sport which is a challenge to the intelligence and a recreation.

As a group activity, class instruction in foil fencing may be presented in such a fashion that both the student's almost universal desire to "fight with swords" and the teacher's need to develop orthodox movements are met. The actual time covered in this outline was 14 clock hours and the average size section handled was 24 students. Allowing a slight variation for age differences, this method has been successfully introduced to students of all ages from five year olds to adult business men and women.

1) The foil is held as if shaking hands with it (thumb on top of handle at all times) with the same amount of pressure used in holding a small bird, firm but not rigid. Have students line up facing the side of the room standing with the feet a comfortable distance apart (one and one half lengths of the fencer's foot) with their weight balanced on both legs. Then pivot on the right heel without turning the body so that the right foot makes a ninety degree angle with the left. (Instructions are given for right handers; left handers substitute ieft for right and vice versa.)

Raise both arms straight out at shoulder level, bend the right elbow back toward the body so that it is approximately six inches, or a handspan, from the ribs. The hand is midway between the shoulder and the hip with the tip of the weapon aiming at the opponent's eyes. The head is turned to the right (every shoulder) and remains straight. The left arm is bent so that the upper arm is horizontal, the forearm perpendicular to the shoulder and the wrist is broken with the fingers pointing toward the head. The knees are bent so that they are over the insteps of the feet. This is called the "on guard" position and is taken by the fencer to assure the greatest efficiency of movement while presenting the smallest target. In the beginning it is a strain to stay on guard for any length of time but the students gradually become accustomed to it.

2) The primary method of attacking an opponent is by the use of the lunge. In teaching the lunge, teach the recovery (back to an on guard) at the same time as the fencer must be prepared to avoid a return hit in case his thrust does not land.

To execute the lunge; 1st, extend the right arm
2nd, brush kick off the floor with right foot landing on the right heel stretching one's self out to the fullest extent with the left foot remaining flat on the floor. Simultaneously the left arm goes back from the elbow to assist in maintaining balance.

To recover to the on guard; 1st, bring right elbow back toward body preparatory to meet opponent's return blow if one is given.
2nd, push with the right leg and pull with the left leg returning to former on guard position.

A good way for a class to practice the lunge is to divide the class in half, having one half of the class on guard at a lunging distance from the wall. The partner holds a glove high against the wall. When the command go is given the glove is dropped and the fencer lunges out and tries to pin the glove to the wall. This improves judgment of distance, speed, coordination of ear, eye, nerve and muscle.

3) Additional footwork: (The instructor should learn to give students clear, authoritative commands. Then the class becomes accustomed to executing controlled movements so that when placed on its own the neuromuscular pattern of coordination has already been formed.)

Advance: Step forward (approximately 12 inches) in an on guard position to gain ground. Right foot steps forward followed by the left foot.

Retreat: The reverse of the advance. Here the back foot moves back first and the front foot follows.

Double lunge: In a lunge the fencer slips left foot up the necessary distance and straightens left leg while right foot advances again.

This is used when fencer has misjudged the lunging distance or the opponent has retreated as the lunge was made.

4) In teaching blade work have the class form in two rows facing each other. Have one row take "Position of Attention." Here the body is turned sideways, heels together at a ninety degree angle with right foot pointing straight ahead toward the other fencer and the foil pointing down toward the floor with the elbow extended. The opposing row assumes the on guard position and to the commands extends arm and lunges, hitting partner's body.

The commands are alternated for the two rows. It is also a good idea to have the rows rotate so that the students are not always working with the same partner.

A simple method of instructing a class to understand the right hand or sixth position is to make them stand with the back against the wall. The back of the hand, the back of the arm and the back of the shoulders flat against the wall assures them of their guard being closed. To teach the fourth guard, about face and have the class lean chest against the wall with the hand and foil in line with the wall. By dropping the blade into the low line, sixth becomes eighth and fourth becomes seventh. Tell the students to imagine that their fencing is done in a narrow corridor just broad enough for their body in an on guard position.

5) Crossing of the blades: The two blades are in contact with each other back to back (i.e. back of hand side of blade) in sixth position.

The pommel of the foil rests in the center of the forearm, held lightly against the wrist. Every time the pommel is moved the tip of the foil moves also. One inch at the pommel means three inches at the tip.

6) A simple disengage and lunge attack, a "one": Both rows are on guard with blades crossed on back sides. Row A disengages point of blade by dropping the tip under the other foil enough to clear the blade. The blade comes up on palm side, she extends and lunges.

7) Defensive movement against a simple disengage and lunge: When Row A attacks with a simple disengage and lunge, Row B moves the foil in a horizontal line approximately three inches to the left side. Row B then releases A's blade and extends her foil to hit A's body in a movement called a riposte.

The defense used against the "one" is called a fourth (quarte) parry. Fencer is actually moving over to the fourth guard.

8) The "one, two": Row A disengages and extends arm, slaps her foot and drops the tip of the foil at the same time. This last enables her to evade the parry which B executes as soon as the foot is slapped. A comes right up again with the tip of her foil and lunges.

9) Row A, "one, two" as in #8.

Row B, some of the time parries only the "one" and some of the time parries both the "one" and the "two." In making a riposte after

the second parry the hit should land over the arm into the bib or neck.

10) The "one, two, three":

Row A: Disengage and extend blade, slap the foot and drop the tip of the blade.

Row B: Parry to the left.

Row A: Come up with tip, slap foot with another dropping of the blade.

Row B: Parry back automatically or with A's second foot slap.

Row A: Come back up in line and lunge.

11) The "one, two, three" continued:

Row A: Disengage and extend, slap the foot.

Row B: Parry to the left and back to the right as rapidly as possible.

Row A: Move tip down and up twice, fast enough so as to avoid B's parries and lunge.

12) Row A: Attack with a "one," a "one, two," or a "one, two, three," making up mind before starting which of the three movements it is to be so as to be prepared to avoid B's parries.

13) Start class off every day by review of previous steps.

14) Counter parry: The circle or counter parry does not involve a change of guard (i.e. the hand does not move to the left). It is very useful against an opponent's "one, two's" and "one, two, three's" since the circle picks up the "one" immediately. Possible offense against a counter parry is a double.

Row A: Attack with a simple disengage and lunge.

Row B: Parry this by dropping the point of the blade under A's (down to partner's knee without lowering the hand) circling under and around A's blade in a clockwise circle. This takes the attacher's blade out to the closed sixth line.

15) Double: Row A: Disengage and extend the blade, slap the foot and as Row B parries a counter by dropping her blade tip and comes up to pick up the blade, go around the back side and under her blade with a small clockwise circle just enough to clear her blade and lunge.

Force Attacks

16) The glide and the graze: These movements are identical except that more force is used with the graze. Which is used depends on the other fencer's guard.

a) If guard is wide open, use neither, simply extend and lunge.

b) If guard is partially open, extend right arm, smoothly slide own blade straight ahead and lunge.

c) If guard is closed, extend right arm and with the lunge break the wrist to the right enough to force the other blade over.

17) Reacting and yielding: When force is used on a fencer's blade she will either yield to the force (remain passive) or immediately force back (resist). A trained fencer learns to do both so that her opponent cannot anticipate which she will do. Beginners have a tendency to yield in class and react in competition.

18) Graze disengage and lunge:

Row A: Extend on partner's blade and slap foot at the same time.

Row B: React by pushing own foil back into line.

Row A: Disengage and lunge.

19) Row A: Use any of predescribed attacks. Omit the slap of the foot.

Row B: Parry and riposte, do not allow attack to land if possible.

20) Press and lunge direct: Blades remain in contact while attacker relaxes grip on her own foil and gives a short quick push releasing immediately so her own blade stays in line. As opponent's blade goes out of line extend arm and lunge immediately.

21) Press disengage and lunge: As in #20 push blade but remain in contact and as opponent returns the push, disengage and lunge.

22) Beat: Take own blade approximately six inches away from opponent's, relax grip on foil, then tighten it bringing the foil up against opponent's at the same time knocking it to the side. Keep own blade in line, extend and lunge.

23) Disengage, beat and lunge.

24) Practice bouts: Have each student in the class fence one practice bout for four touches or less if time is limited. Have the instructor signify who is to be the attacker and who is to defend.

25) Parrying of opponent's riposte.

Disengage riposte: Following a parry, immediately disengage and riposte.

26) Practice outside of class: Formation of a student's fencing club where the beginners may have a chance to fence with the more experienced fencers.

27) We live in a competitive world and the individual satisfaction derived from scoring a touch on another fencer by using the technique and strategy learned has a definite value in the learning process. The physical and mental exercise serves as a valve releasing pent up emotion and nervous energy. The ability to rapidly command and to follow through by executing the desired movement is the essence of education.

Consideration of the Individual Fencer in Class Instruction

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College classes in physical education offer a fine opportunity to teach fencing with an emphasis on the individual. The enthusiastic desire to learn to fence that the absolute beginner brings to her first class in fencing is, perhaps, the teacher's greatest challenge. To preserve this enthusiasm, to build on it, and to keep the novice interested during the mental and physical discipline required in the course of the first few weeks of fencing, needs understanding both of the sport and of the individual.

As in all instruction, not only is each fencing class different, but each individual is also unique. To meet the needs of each individual, the instructor has to expend considerable personal energy, particularly when introducing any new parry or attack. But the rewards for this are great in terms of the progress the class makes as a whole.

In addition to presenting basic skills and techniques, the teacher will find that certain situations are common to every beginning and intermediate fencing class. Some of these are: the beginner's fear of being touched with a foil, hesitancy to touch an opponent, shrinking of the body as the fencer parries, inability of the student to phrase or lack of continuity in fencing, and the student's need for help in fencing strategy.

As an aid in giving the beginner confidence, it is quite helpful to present the parries of quarte and sixte, with their ripostes, immediately after presenting the guard position, advance, retreat, lunge, and recovery. Since the lunge, when properly executed, includes straightened arms, the novice has automatically learned the simplest of the attacks – the straight thrust. Timing, speed, and the use of the straight thrust in bouting will, of course, come later. Before any attack is made against any beginner in class fencing, it has proved helpful to teach a defensive action. Presentation of the parries, or any new skill should not be hurried. Verbal description, demonstration, personal checking of each beginner's hand position, and testing for success of the parry should be done before the beginners are allowed to continue with repeated practice of the new skill.

To check the success of the parry, the instructor can lunge repeatedly with a straight thrust in the line which the student is learning to defend. Thus, only that attack which the novice knows is used against her. With each parry made, suggestions may be given to improve the movement. Try not to leave any beginner until she has been completely successful at least two or three times in the new skill. It might also be mentioned that those students who are waiting to be checked will be observing every detail of the instructor's guard position, her lunge, thrust, and recovery. Each must be executed in perfect form, for the fencer's first learning seems to involve much mimicry – the understanding for each action in some cases comes later.

Although this seems to be a time consuming process, if the verbal description and demonstration have been carefully made in perfect detail, the actual time the instructor spends with each student is very short. However, the number of lunges involved in checking a class of 14 to 20 requires a tremendous expenditure of energy. It is obvious, therefore, that the teacher should be a skillful fencer, or have lunged enough in advance to condition her legs to be able to do the work without any loss of form because of fatigue. It is also helpful if the instructor (right-handed) places herself at the extreme right of one of the lines of fencers when it becomes necessary to work with one student while the class is working in pairs. From this position it is possible to have the entire class within her vision.

It might be added that any new parry or attack, however simple or advanced, may be effectively presented by this same method of verbal description, demonstration, checking and testing.

With but one attack and one parry that have been practiced enough so the beginners have mastered them reasonably well, the novices are in a position to put on their masks, check their plastrons to see that they give maximum protection at the neck, and to come on guard opposite a partner. This is a moment that usually should be treated with high, good humor to capitalize on the spirit that each beginner brought with her to "sword fight" her opponent. After the initial flurry and laughter, one line may be designated as number ones and the other as number twos. It seems to produce greatest results if the class as a whole works under command. Upon command, one line takes the attack, the other lets her hit. This facing of partners will, of course, bring up the matters of engaging blades, lines of engagement, distance, review of the target, the elements of the lunge, and the attack. The parry is added after the attackers have executed the thrust successfully. Although the attack and parry are simple ones it will take time to perfect them, for the novice must incorporate all the elements of fencing thus far learned.

The instructor should be on the alert to intervene immediately in any twosome where a beginner is either afraid to hit or to be hit.

For the girl who is afraid to touch her opponent, the instructor can help her overcome this fear by lunging against her, setting the foil tip lightly but firmly against the target. The knowledge that the touch is so lightly felt will, in most cases, remove the concern. The fencer should also lunge against the teacher a number of times to gain assurance that she will not hurt her opponent. Reminding the attacker that the tip of the foil lands lightly when the straightened arm is moved in by the legs as she lunges, will help the beginner to differentiate between jabbing and executing an attack that lands lightly under perfect control. Also, the teacher can reassure the beginner that her opponent is in a position to defend herself at any time by merely moving her foil into the line of the attack and parrying her out. A few moments spent at the time of the very first attack with the hesitant attacker will, as a rule, overcome her dislike of hitting her opponent. In the experience of the author this problem is more prevalent in girls' than in boys' classes.

For the beginner who is afraid to be touched, she must first be given confidence in her ability to defend herself. It usually helps if the instructor makes straight thrust attacks against the fearful defender. The thrust must be timed so the beginner is completely successful in the defense. It also often helps the new fencer to be reminded that, once having parried, she is in a position to attack with a riposte. Having successfully parried and riposted, the student is then ready to take the attack against the instructor. Doing this, she will gain further assurance that, although touches land, no one will be hurt. When the student has thus been reassured, the teacher may resume lunging with a straight thrust, asking the beginner to allow her to hit. At no time should the student be startled with a quick action or be hit without warning. Once a touch has been made against her, touch her again and again. Let her defend herself with a parry; let her allow herself to be hit. The time spent with the fencer who is afraid of being hit will, in general, have to be longer than that spent to reassure the novice who hesitates to attack. For the fearful student the retreat may also be incorporated into the defense at this time. Help her to realize that her foil, properly used, is a perfect weapon to give a complete defense against any attack, but that a small retreat which does not remove her too far to affect the riposte touch can also be very effectively employed. The retreat, with the parry, will usually stop the tendency of the fencer to shrink as she parries. In other words, it may be necessary to present some techniques to an individual fencer, prior to presenting them to the entire class, if this will give her confidence. Some timid beginners become expert fencers. If their needs are met with ingenuity and patience the reward can be great indeed.

After fencers have reasonable command of the three simple attacks, the parries of quarte and sixte as well as their counter move-

ments, the riposte, the one-two, the general principle of the use of the feint, and perhaps the parry of seconde, they are ready to get the feeling of continuity in their fencing. It would be incorrect to give the impression that all class members will have the same degree of ability in all skills and techniques. There may, in fact, be wide variation, despite the individual attention that has been given.

Phrasing in fencing is partly a state of mind. It is usually easier for the more aggressive fencer to develop a sense of phrasing than it is for the one who prefers to defend. But, of course, both are involved if a phrase is to materialize. A combination of attack and defense that has been particularly successful in the author's classes begins with a cut-over feint into sixte, followed by an attack in seconde. The defender parries sixte and seconde, riposting in seconde. The attacker parries the riposte with a seconde parry and counter ripostes, the exchange in the low line continuing until one of the fencers can command her foil to make a disengagement attack from the low to the high outside line. When the exchange in the low lines is very rapid, it takes mental discipline to break the reflex action and change the direction of the attack. This is true, of course, when an exchange is taking place in any line.

The method used to teach the above combination involves description, demonstration, and when a couple is having difficulty, personal assistance by the instructor. After the fencers know what they are to do through demonstration, they are lined up in two rows. They are asked to engage in the line of quarte and number ones are directed to attack, number twos will not defend. After three successful touches have been made with the cutover attack, number twos are asked to parry the attack. This will be a parry of sixte. When the attackers have been parried successfully three times, they are now ready to use the cut-over as a feint and to disengage attack in the low, outside line. The defenders will continue to parry only sixte or, in other words, to parry the feint. Remind the attackers that the feint must be made in such a way as to draw the parry or it is not serving its purpose. The disengagement following the feint must then be timed to the parry. At the moment of the beginning of the parry is the instant when the disengagement should be executed. After the attackers have successfully touched their opponents three times in the outside low line, number twos are asked to add the parry of seconde. This will be repeated until the low line parry is effective at least three times. Number twos will then add the straight thrust riposte into their partner's outside low line. After three successful ripostes, number ones will parry the riposte. The final step in the exchange comes with a disengagement counter-riposte by number ones to land a touch in the high outside line. The gradual build-up of this series of movements may be applied to any combination that the instructor wishes to use.

Another fine combination involves an initial one-two attack. The feint is parried with a simple movement, the attack with a counter movement. A straight thrust riposte is added. This is parried and a counter-riposte is attempted. The counter-riposte is parried to be followed by a disengagement attack into the opposite high line. At the moment of the counter parry of the initial attack, the defender makes a small retreat. This gives her the advantage of a moment of time and a bit of distance as she counter parries. It also prevents the pulling back of the shoulder as the parry is executed.

These continuous action drills are easier for the students to associate with the actual bout than the attacks and parries learned separately. It is axiomatic, however, that the basic skills of the guard position, the advance, retreat, lunge, recovery, parries, and the three simple attacks must be well under command before the students are ready to smoothly execute a series of movements.

Phrasing, of course, involves much more than a planned attack and an exchange of ripostes. Once an attack is started, the aggressor should have in mind that she can redouble, remise, or renew the attack if the defender does not immediately riposte. The remise is perhaps attempted more often than the redoublement or renewal of the attack. Used judiciously the remise can be a clever means of scoring, but used indiscriminately it can become a bad habit.

For fencers to acquire a sense of the renewal of the attack, have them work in pairs with one retreating out of distance as the attack is parried. The attacker will recover forward from the lunge and immediately lunge again. The fencers will thus work across the floor with one person repeatedly lunging, always making a sincere attempt to touch the opponent. When the opposite wall is reached the defender will take the attack, the pair moving back across the room. On the second time across, add the riposte following the successful parry, then the counter riposte. The ability to phrase will come with continued practice. The foil wielders will begin to have the feeling of what fencing is with the beginning of phrasing. Also, at this point the realm of strategy begins to open for the student.

Long before fencers are ready for phrasing and are able to use strategy, it is important that they be allowed to bout. The exertion and time required to become facile may well be too great for some who would become excellent fencers, if their enthusiasm had not been dampened by a lack of enjoyment to season the hard work of learning. Some poor control, poor judgment, some loss of form are all insignificant compared with the loss of a potential fencer because it has been all work and no play.

Fencing games add much spirit and enjoyment to class instruction. The complete informality of some games provide respite from the rigors or precision required in perfecting fencing skills. One simple game that never fails to delight is a free-for-all. One person is

in the middle of the gymnasium, the other fencers are dispersed about the room, none of them in pairs. At the signal, "fence," any student may move to fence with any other student. One touch eliminates a fencer. No fencers need remain with a partner until one is touched, but may instead break away to intervene in other bouts or touch other fencers on the back. The last person to remain untouched wins, and takes her place in the center to again signal "Fence!"

In conclusion, although the instructor's presentation of fencing is through the class medium, she in no way is limited to mass presentation of skills. All of the problems that arise in private lessons will be present in a class of fencers, yet they can be handled quite effectively if care and patience are given at the time of introduction of each new skill and technique. Also, the small amount of time devoted by the instructor to each individual fencer to test her knowledge and ability at the initial presentation of parries and attacks will, to a very great extent, prevent serious difficulties from arising later, for the fencer's basic skills will be sound. The work, flavored with the salt of play, will be rewarding for the fencers as well as for the instructor.

Maintaining the Interest of the Experienced Fencer

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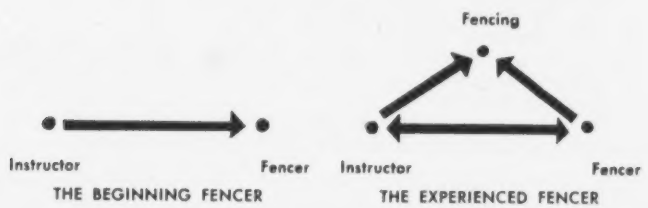
Today's student desires perfection! Whether it is called "mastery" (Marie Johoda), "competence" (Robert White), or "achievement" (David McClelland), that desire is still present in each individual with whom we come in contact in our teaching. Our task is to kindle this inherent desire for perfection, specifically in the art and sport of fencing, and to keep the spark burning. The "feminine type" of girl may be attracted to the aesthetic quality of fencing, to its grace and beauty. The "intellectual type" may become intrigued by the fun of trying to outwit one's opponent through the agility of mind and body. The "All-American" girl may enjoy the action, excitement, and competitiveness of this activity. All three types can learn to appreciate and enjoy those qualities as they relate to the individual and to fencing. All of these girls want perfection!

Naturally we all hope that our beginning students will like fencing well enough to continue their participation beyond their first class experience. At the same time, we must provide actual opportunities so that continued participation is possible – intermediate or advanced classes, clubs, clinics, intramurals, extramurals, etc. Whereas the beginning class in fencing tends to resemble a large lecture survey course, a seminar approach is more appropriate for experienced fencers. This concept can be illustrated as follows:



THE BEGINNING FENCER THE EXPERIENCED FENCER

The instructor imparts basic knowledge to the beginning fencer; with the experienced fencer, there should be a greater exchange or dislogue between student and teacher on points of fencing style and strategy.

Warm-ups

The experienced fencer appreciates a meaningful conditioning program, for "a warm heart and cold muscles maketh a fatigued fencer." Conditioning exercises can be an interesting and integral part of the fencing lesson. Here are some suggestions:

A. Pectorals
   1. Starting position: Stand erect, arms at side.
   2. Movement:
      a. Swing arms forward to shoulder height, palms down.
      b. Fling elbows back as far as possible, keeping arms parallel to floor (accent this count).
      c. Fling arms forward again to shoulder height.
      d. Swing arms down to original position.
   3. Directions: "Swing, *fling*, fling, swing."

B. Hamstrings
   1. Starting position: Stand erect, arms overhead.
   2. Movement:
      a. Touch toes, keeping knees straight (relax neck).
      b. Bend knees to squat position, extending arms forward.
      c. Touch toes again, keeping knees straight (as in count #1).
      d. Return to starting position with arms overhead.
   3. Directions: "Touch, bend, touch, up."

C. Deep knee bends
   1. Starting position: Stand erect with foil held horizontally with both hands in front of body, feet apart with toes pointing outward.
   2. Movement:
      a. Up on toes
      b-c. Down (slowly to deep knee bending).
      d-e. Up (slowly to standing position).
      f. Lower heels to floor.
   3. Emphasize: Balance, knees out over toes, straight spine (not inclined forward), and use of legs in coming up to original standing position.

D. Rope jumping combinations (agility, timing, and coordination).
E. Running in place (development of cardiovascular efficiency).

Each instructor can devise a suitable series of warm-ups which will not only be valuable for the body but "fencing-like" in quality.

Techniques (ideas for "the old and the new")

A. Footwork
1. Practice every class period.
2. Use different combinations (becoming gradually more difficult and intricate).
3. Stress balance, speed, timing in fencing; precision in footwork and technique.
4. On guard – Weight in heels.
5. "Advance – 1,2"
   a. Count 1: Step forward with front heel.
   b. Count 2: Bring back foot up to on guard position and, at the same time, lower front toe to floor.
6. "Retreat – 1,2"
   a. Count 1: Step back with back foot, pushing off from the front heel.
   b. Count 2: Bring front foot back to on guard position, lowering both heels to floor at same time.
7. Avoid "bobbing" up and down; keep hips level.

B. Offense
1. Lunge
   a. Stress *linear* movement – length!
   b. *Thrust* – (lean) – lunge.
   c. Extend foil arm first; attack with *straight* arm.
   d. Kick forward with front heel.
   e. Drive from back foot (by straightening knee).
   f. Avoid over-lunging; knee should be over instep, not toe.
   g. Recovery: Push off from heel of front foot.
2. "Variations on the Lunge" (teach with rhythmic counts)
   a. Advance lunge
      (1) Advance (with extended foil arm) – 1,2.
      (2) Lunge – 3.
      (3) Effective against fencer who stands too far away or who constantly retreats (or parry-retreats).
   b. Ballestra
      (1) Jump (with extended foil arm) – 1.
      (2) Lunge – 2.
      (3) Effective as surprise attack if used judiciously; jump *out* to on guard, rather than up (forward motion).
   c. Lunge – recover forward – lunge.
      (1) Lunge – 1.
      (2) Recover forward (to on guard) – 2.
      (3) Lunge – 3.
      (4) Effective against opponent who retreats (with or without parry).

3. Beat
   a. Purpose: To knock blade aside (open the line), to get a reaction, to invite opponent's attack.
   b. Tighten last three fingers for quick, crisp action.
   c. Combinations:
      (1) Beat-lunge.
      (2) Beat-disengage-lunge.
      (3) Beat-thrust-disengage-lunge (hoping to draw a parry on the extension).

4. Disengage
   a. Fingerplay, with bent or straight arm.
   b. Change line of engagement –
      (1) From inside to outside (or outside to inside).
      (2) From high to low (or low to high).
   c. Combinations:
      (1) Disengage-thrust-lean-lunge.
      (2) Disengage-thrust-lean-disengage-lunge.
      (3) Thrust-lean-disengage-lunge.

5. Cutover (coupe)
   a. Thumb and wrist action.
   b. Emphasize strong thrust after the cutover.
   c. Effective when opponent holds foil low, against a shorter fencer, or on riposte following a low parry.
   d. Combinations:
      (1) Cutover-thrust-lunge.
      (2) Cutover-thrust-disengage-lunge.
      (3) Disengage (low)-cutover-thrust-lunge.

6. Fleche
   a. Usually preceded by a yell.
   b. Thrust-lean-lean-*jump-run* (drive with legs and pass by adversary).
   c. Push off from back foot; jump into attack, leading with back foot.
   d. Effective to use a feint (particularly the beat) simultaneously with jumping motion.
   e. Imperative to aim accurately!
   f. Timing is important in executing the running attack.
   g. Used when opponent is near end of strip.

C. Defense
   1. Lateral parries
      a. Parry 4 protects high inside line.
      b. Parry 6 protects high outside line.

c. "Beat-like" quality.
d. Precise.
e. Strong (forte) against weak (foible).
f. *Riposte immediately!*
(1) Parry-extend (direct).
(2) Parry-disengage-extend (indirect).

2. Semicircular parries
a. Parry 7 protects low inside line.
(1) Tip of foil dropped in semicircle clockwise.
(2) Tip points at opponent's knee.
(3) Hand in supination.
b. Parry 2 protects low outside line.
(1) Tip of foil dropped in semicircle counterclockwise.
(2) Tip points at opponent's knee.
(3) Hand in pronation.

3. Circular parries (used against the disengage)
a. Counter 4: Follow opponent's tip counterclockwise.
b. Counter 6: Follow opponent's tip clockwise.
c. "Double": Teach counter-attack against the circular parry; follow opponent's blade around and lunge to open line.

Strategy

1. Sizing-up the opponent ("feel out" adversary; find weaknesses as well as strengths).
2. Does she parry?
3. What kind of parries does she use?
4. Does she have a preference for certain parries?
5. Does she counter-attack (riposte)?
6. Does she retreat or hold her ground?
7. How does she react to a feint?
8. Does she initiate the attack?

Special Features

A. "The individual approach"
   1. Suggest individual work-out (lesson) with instructor, at least once a week, if possible; even a few minutes of concentrated practice will help!
   2. Experienced fencers can help beginners in this way; nothing aids a beginner more than fencing with someone who is better than she!
   3. Form is basic, but encourages development of individual style.

B. Guest master class (with some individual lessons beforehand or afterward)

C. Fencing atelier (clinic)

D. Bouting
   1. Class
      a. Scoring
      b. Judging
      c. Directing
      d. Practice-bouts
      e. Class tournament
   2. Intramurals
      a. Individual
         (1) Beginners; experienced
         (2) See sample scoresheet for individual matches.
      b. Team
         (1) Dorms
         (2) Classes
   3. Interscholastics (extramural)
      a. Team
         (1) Triangular meet works well with teams of three fencers each.
         (2) See sample scoresheet for team matches.
      b. Individual
         (1) Area
         (2) State

Maintaining the interest of the experienced fencer presents an exciting challenge to the instructor. Let us think of our fencing programs beyond "Sixteen Lessons for the Beginner." After all, we too want perfection! Today's student *and* teacher alike desire "mastery," "competence," and "achievement" in the fascinating skill of fencing.

Scoresheet for Individual Competition

NAME	NOS	1	2	3	4	5	WINS	LOSS	PLACE
Carol	1		0/W	11/W	111/L	1111/L	2	2	Third
Fay	2	1111/L		1/W	1111/L	1111/L	1	3	Fourth
Sylvia	3	1111/L	111/L		1111/L	1111/L	0	4	Fifth
Dianna	4	11/W	0/W	11/W		1/W	4	0	First
Mary	5	1/W	0/W	111/W	1111/L		3	1	Second

Order of Bouts

5 Competitors (10 Bouts)				6 Competitors (15 Bouts)						7 Competitors (21 Bouts)							8 Competitors (28 Bouts)								9 Competitors (36 Bouts)									10 Competitors (45 Bouts)									
1	4	2	4	1	4	1	6	6	4	1	4	5	1	3	5	1	5	1	7	1	2	1	4	1	4	1	5	2	5	7	8	1	6	6	5	7	4	6	7	2	4
2	3	5	1	2	5	2	4	1	3	2	5	4	3	1	6	2	6	2	8	3	4	2	5	6	2	2	4	6	8	9	1	2	7	1	8	8	5	8	9	6	8
4	5	4	3	3	6	3	5	5	6	3	6	6	2			3	7	3	5	5	6	8	5	7	7	3	6	7	9	2	3	3	8	2	9	10	1	5	1	7	9
1	2	5	2	5	1	2	1			7	1	5	7	4	3	4	8	4	6	7	8	6	7	5	8	4	8	1	3	4	5	4	9	3	10	2	6	2	3	5	7
3	5	3	1	6	2	4	5			5	4	3	1	6	5	6	1	8	1	3	1			6	9	5	9	5	7	6	7	5	10	4	6	3	7	6	10	8	10
				4	3	3	2			2	3	4	6	1	2	7	2	5	2	4	2			7	1	8	1	9	2	8	9	7	1	5	7	4	8	7	8	1	4
										6	7	7	2	4	7	8	3	6	3	7	5			8	2	7	2	1	6	2	1	8	2	9	1	9	5	4	5	5	3
																5	4	7	4	6	8			9	3	8	3	3	5	3	4	9	3	10	2	1	2	10	9	9	6
																								4	7	9	4	4	6	5	6	10	4	6	3	3	4	3	1	7	10

Scoresheet for Team Competition

TEAM	NAME	NO.	TOUCHES AGAINST 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	WINS OF EACH FENCER	WINS OF TEAM
Red College	Sue	1						1/W	0/W	11/W			3	6
	Lynn	2						11/W	0/W	111/L			2	
	Caroline	3						1111/L	111/L	111/L			0	
		4												
		5												
Blue College	Nancy	6	111/L	1111/L	11/W			DIRECTOR					1	4
	Joanne	7	1111/L	1111/L	111/W			JUDGES					1	
	Betsy	8	1111/L	1/W	111/W								2	
		9												
		10												

Order of Bouts

Teams of 2	Teams of 3	Teams of 4		Teams of 5		
1–6	1–6	1–6	1–8	1–6	4–10	3–6
2–7	2–7	2–7	2–9	2–7	5–6	4–7
1–7	3–8	3–8	3–6	3–8	1–8	5–8
2–6	1–7	4–9	4–7	4–9	2–9	1–10
	2–8	1–7	1–9	5–10	3–10	2–6
	3–6	2–8	2–6	1–7	4–6	3–7
	1–8	3–9	3–7	2–8	5–7	4–8
	2–6	4–6	4–8	3–9	1–9	5–9
	3–7				2–10	

Discovery Learning

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As educators, we sometimes come to think of the "discovery" method as applicable for work only with young children. It is the scope and purpose of the present article however, to demonstrate that such learning is elemental as opposed to elementary. Moreover, we desire to share with you a plan that has proved itself successful in teaching fencing at the college level.

The virtue of the methodology, we believe, is that it focuses the responsibility for learning primarily on the fencer. Our postulate is that understanding by (self) discovery leads to effective learning, wherein effective implies transfer of principles of movement. Although intraproblem transfer is emphasized, it is our hope that interactivity transfer also would occur.

We refer to a unit which extended over an eight week session and included twenty-four, 35-minute meetings. The class itself was comprised of freshman women completing a general one-year university requirement. Entering students had completed a movement fundamentals unit in which they had gained a knowledge of mechanical principles. For this reason, our unit was designed to help the student redefine and apply these principles to the movement pattern requirements in fencing. Development of personalized movement efficiency as well as meeting task demands was considered an objective for each individual.

Within the course, students were guided in the discovery of and thereby gained proficiency in each of the following:

Fundamental footwork skills: on guard, advance, retreat, lunge, recovery, forward recovery, jumps;

Offensive and defensive skills: straight thrust, disengage, one-two, cutover, beat, combinations of these in lines 4, 6, 7, 8, and lateral and counter parries;

Fundamentals of bouting: rules, judging, directing, and basic strategies. Knowledges related to development of physiological conditioning, that is, identification of problems, and improvement

of self for meeting the requirements of fencing, was also an objective.

Included in this article are parts of four consecutive lessons designed to establish footwork patterns. Specific examples contain (1) the nature and objectives of tasks set by the teacher in utilizing the discovery approach, (2) class solutions reached by students as the result of teacher mediated discussion, and (3) reasons for student rejection of alternate solutions.

In conjunction with this unit the students identified seven specific areas of movement involving the use of muscles and bodily regions which, when employed in fencing practice, may result in strain and discomfort if not properly conditioned. A conditioning program for the development of these parts was developed and is included as an appendix to this article.

ADVANCE AND RETREAT

Task 1: Given the target and the area delimitation of the fencing strip, establish a position in which you can move forward and backward as rapidly and efficiently as possible. Keep in mind that your own target must be protected, and that you should be able to reach your opponent with the foil tip.

Desired Result: The advance and retreat.
Solutions:

1. The foil arm should be closest to the opponent in order to maximize reach.
2. The heels should be placed at right angles to the body; hence, the forward foot will point in the line of intended direction of force.
3. The feet should be a distance apart as a moderately wide base of support leads to maximum stability.
4. The feet should move in such a way that they need not cross each other, hence, eliminating the possibility of tripping. In other words, the relationship of the feet should remain the same – the front in front and the back foot in back.
5. During movement, the feet never should come completely together because of the need for a stable base of support. (Later, students would come to regard the distance as the width of the on guard position.)
6. Body segments should be aligned vertically, as the body tends to be more stable when projection of the center of gravity falls within the supporting base. In general, students designate this an efficient postural position.
7. The fencer should turn the foil side toward the opponent in order to decrease target surface. When the trunk is facing the

line of direction of the back foot, exposure is minimized; whereas rotation of the trunk toward the front foot maximizes target area.

8. In moving backward, it is most efficient to keep the same foot facing relationship because (a) speed of movement is decreased when time is spent changing the position of the feet, and (b) when only the position of the back foot is changed, the size of the supporting base decreases.
9. Steps taken in moving forward or backward should occur without "bouncing" in order to maintain point control. Stability is enhanced by maintaining a "sitting" position (lower center of gravity).
10. The forward or rear foot, in moving either forward or backward, should be lifted. Friction between foot and floor will tend to slow resultant movement. It is important to note that when moving forward or backward, the rear or front momentarily becomes the sole base of support while the opposite foot steps. This shift of weight should not affect stability.

ON GUARD

Task 2: Establish the most efficient "ready position" possible in order to move in the way you have just determined.

Desired Result: The on guard or ready position.
Solutions:

1. The feet (heels) should be at right angles with the forward foot facing the line of direction for stability and readiness for motion (review of task 1, solutions 3 and 9).
2. The knees should be bent in the direction of the feet. A muscle on stretch has greater potential force and the lower the center of gravity, the more stable the body.
3. The back or non-foil arm can either be extended from the shoulder for balance or rest on the back hip. It should not be placed in front of the body; such placement will cause rotation of the trunk, thus exposing more target.

JUMP FORWARD AND BACKWARD

Task 3: Establish a means by which you can move forward or backward more rapidly than by either advancing or retreating.

Desired Result: Jump forward and backward.
Solutions:

1. Crossing the feet is to be avoided (see task 1, solution 4).

2. It is possible to jump in the desired direction if one pushes both feet "into the floor" at an angle. Students note that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Moreover, they discover it can be related to the principles governing projectiles.
3. The jump covers greater distance and has more speed than either the advance or retreat. It is an explosive, forceful move and is low in height, resulting in speed and distance.

THE LUNGE

Task 4: From an on guard position, determine the fastest means by which you can (1) hit on target with the tip of the foil with sufficient force to "draw blood" and (2) extend the foil arm during the movement.

Desired Result: The lunge and use of the back arm for increasing speed of the lunge. This addition has altered the original extended arm versus hand on hip solution for the on guard position.

Solutions:

1. A stretching position of the body coupled with arm extension will move the foil tip closer to the opponent.
2. In order to keep the center of gravity over the supporting base, the forward leg must step forward.
3. Bending the forward knee will allow a greater reach.
4. Keeping the back knee straight will allow a greater reach.
5. Keeping the back foot flat on the floor will prevent body weight from rolling onto the ankle (a potential cause of injury).
6. Keeping the back knee straight will prevent trunk rotation (therefore keeping the target protected).
7. Pushing forcefully off the back foot will result in greater speed of movement.
8. If the back arm has been extended from the shoulder and flexed at the elbow, forceful extension of that arm should increase the speed of the forward stretch. The magnitude of force is dependent upon the number of segments used, the speed of each segment, and the timing of sequence of segments. For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

THE RECOVERY

Task 5: Assume you have executed a lunge, but have failed to hit target. How can you most rapidly move away from your opponent?

Desired Result: The recovery.
Solution:

1. If the body segments are aligned over the base of support, pushing forcefully with the front foot will lift the body weight and allow the foot to return to the original on guard position.
2. Taking advantage of the momentum created by the forceful movement backward and retreating will move you rapidly out of opponent's reach.

RECOVER FORWARD

Task 6: After lunging, you have fallen short of target; how can you move into position to attack a second time?

Desired Result: Recover forward.
Solutions:

1. Shift the body segments over the front foot, which becomes the new, temporary base of support. Pick up the back foot and place it relative to the on guard position.
2. The body is now in position to lunge a second time.

STUDENT-DEVELOPED CONDITIONING PROGRAM

From demands placed upon the student within the context of fencing, she is readily able to identify those bodily regions that need strengthening. Concerned with the fatigue effects (aches and pains) associated with inadequate conditioning, fencers are motivated to seek ways to prevent discomfort as well as to increase personal capacity. An example of a student-developed conditioning program is as follows:

ACTIVITY	PURPOSE	POSITION	ACTION
I. *Wall S..*	I. To develop quadriceps strength.	I. Feet 10" from wall, sit with knees flexed at 90 degree angle, thighs parallel to the floor, back against the wall, hands at side and heels off the floor.	I. Hold sitting position for one minute.
II. *Knee Bends*	II. To develop knee extensor and quadricep strength.	II. Stand in lunge position with front leg flexed at 45 degree angle and back leg extended with heel on floor.	II. Flex and extend front leg as many times as possible within one minute.
III. *Elbow Flexion*	III. To develop biceps strength.	III. Stand in stride posi- and abduct arms while elevating five pound weights to a 90 degree angle.	III. .Hold position for one to five minutes.

IV. *Arm Lifts*	IV. To develop deltoid strength.	IV. Stand in stride position, abduct both arms to a 90 degree angle with palms facing down.	IV. Elevate arms from a 90 degree angle to 180 degree angle and back as many times as possible within one minute.
V. *Line-Beat Drill*	V. To develop hand strength and digital control.	V. Assume on guard position with foils engaged (partner).	V. Beat, disengage with maximum repetition for one minute.
VI. *Triple Advance, retreat*	VI. To increase speed, endurance and coordination of leg flexors and extensors.	VI. Assume on guard with foil, measure and mark off floor space covered with three advances and retreats.	VI. Execute maximum number of sets of advances and retreats in one minute. A full set of three advances and three retreats scores one point. Original boundary marked off becomes points fencer must reach.
VII. *Target Lunge*	VII. To increase speed and accuracy in the lunge with a straight thrust.	VII. Assume on guard with foil; position self a lunge from the wall. Round target six inches in diameter is drawn on the wall at fencer's chest level.	VII. Lunge with straight thrust at target, recover and repeat for maximum trials in one minute.

Proprioceptive Aid for Beginners

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Fencing is notoriously hard to learn. Students often quit even before fundamental proficiency is acquired, and competitive success for the few who persevere is normally expected to take two years or longer.

The great majority of sports is based on habits developed in early childhood, such as running and jumping, throwing and catching, using a bat or racket, etc. In addition to the fact that people come to it much later in life, fencing includes practically no familiar, symmetrical, or repetitive sequences. The fencer walks sideways and must perform different movements simultaneously with all his limbs; strong, gross leg actions must be coordinated with delicate finger-work at amazing speed and with precise timing. The baseball batter who swings and misses has a chance to rest and get set again, but the fencer who fails in his attack must be able to continue, instantly making a choice between several possible courses. Thus, fencing imposes an unusually severe demand for self-control of flexibility and balance. Almost the only easy learners are girls who have had considerable ballet or modern dance instruction. Surprisingly, good athletes may have more trouble than the average person.

There is a way to teach basic fencing skills quickly. *Drill your students with their eyes closed.* This alone will provide gratifying progress, but if class size permits, also conduct blind individual lessons occasionally, up to the highest levels. From the very first session, as soon as movements have been dem. strated, explained, and practiced enough for response to voice commands, institute blind drills.

This procedure engages the student's inherent proprioceptive faculty. One who does not perceive her mistakes can not improve. Blind, the individual will be careful not to make those jerky, explosive actions with which we are all too familiar. With the distraction of sight removed, she turns her attention to her equilibrium, her position, and her movements as felt from within. She can become aware of misplaced weight, incorrect posture, and excessive stiffness, and thereby work toward control. About three sessions are spent without the weapons, itself a distraction.

True, the addition of blind practice is time consuming. Assuming the method is valuable, other parts of the instructional program

must give way. Far too many teachers, in my opinion, attempt to impart the entire system of fencing mechanics in one semester or quarter – about three or four months. We ought to substitute the goal of greater skill in a smaller repertoire. I have no doubt – since I have seen proof in tournament play – that beginning competitors who know a few simple actions will triumph over those who are merely acquainted with many complicated sequences. The instructor must, therefore, limit the material presented. Progress can not be defined by the sheer number of different combinations described, demonstrated, and poorly executed by the class.

One of the principal reasons instructors become involved with a complete review of attack and defense is that they are afraid students will be bored. It is a trap that must be avoided at all costs. Blind exercises and lessons themselves will amuse students. A firm grasp of fundamentals should also permit beginners to enter the bouting situation earlier, and that should be quite enough for the first course. Refinements can come later for those who do sign up for a second semester or a second year.

A word about form. Good fencing form is determined by function and efficiency in combat. Good form is that which gives more touches in the long run, statistically, over hundreds or thousands of bouts, and not merely immediate success. I am a teacher of competitive fencing, not ballet, so I am not concerned with pretty movement for its own sake. I do not claim that fencing improves posture or imparts gracefulness. However, it just happens that effective action does sometimes appear beautiful. The necessity to control balance and avoid immoderate tension develops abilities which carry over into other activities, although this result is considered incidential. For all such purposes, blind work is productive.

Experiment with this method. Particularize and expand your own routine from the following outline. The results are usually obvious at once.

Blind Drills

1st Session. Without weapons, slow. First position (attention). Going on guard. Shifting weight, correcting and loosening shoulders, arms, legs, etc., while guarding. Advancing. Retreating. Extending the fighting arm, recovering. (Lunging, the hallmark of good fencing, is reserved for special attention later.)

2nd Session. With weapons, slow to medium pace. Review. Lunging and recovering.

3rd Session. Without weapons, medium to fast. Complete drill. (Throughout the course, repeated practice without weapons may prove worthwhile.)

4th Session (after introduction to foil). With weapons. First position. Saluting. Donning mask. Going on guard. Loosening grip. Review all basic actions. Returning to 1st position. Removing mask. Saluting.

Subsequent Sessions. Review frequently as complete sessions or as part of each warm-up period. Possible additions: Changing guards, advance-lunging, retreat-lunging, etc.

Blind Individual Lessons

Elementary (slow to medium). Single disengagement from pressure, lunging. Parrying once when opposite blade leaves engagement, with direct or indirect *riposte*. Answering beat and *riposting* or attacking, direct or indirect.

Intermediate (slow to medium). From pressure, 1-2 or double. Parrying twice when opposing blade leaves engagement, with direct or indirect *riposte*. Parrying once and *riposting* by 1-2 or double.

Advance (medium to fast). Review of elementary and intermediate lessons, with retreating on parrying, advancing on *riposting*, and attacking by advance-lunging.

Very Advanced (medium to fast). Actions *not* starting in engagement. On "Go!" student will assume conditions are right for a sequence described and practiced beforehand. Attacking open target. Attacking against point-in-line by opposing, blinding, beating. Parry-*riposting*.

Advanced and very advanced lessons could be deferred to the second semester.

Exercises in Footwork for Beginners

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Very often little attention is paid to the teaching of fencing footwork beyond the use of the lunge to attack, the advance to approach one's opponent, and the retreat to keep one's opponent from approaching too close. In particular, little effort is directed toward teaching novices to coordinate movements of the foil with movements of the feet. Although all footwork must be practiced first without an opponent, using wall mats or the wall itself as a target, the coordination of offensive and defensive movements of the foil with offensive and defensive footwork should be emphasized from the first.

New foil techniques should be presented with simple footwork, while new combinations of footwork should be selected according to the skill level and needs of the class. Since it is so difficult to learn spontaneous use of disengage actions, however, the instructor should not over-emphasize the use of the direct lunge and direct parry riposte. She *should* emphasize disengage; double-disengage, and double attacks; disengage ripostes, and counter-parries. An infinite variety of combinations is possible.

In most of the following exercises, the students repeat each phrase a minimum of three times before exchanging roles of defender and attacker. The exercises should not be presented as a whole to the students. When first taught, each exercise should consist of a maximum of three actions; more actions being added as the fencers become familiar with the sequence. When the actions are made more complicated by involving the use of various combinations of disengages, counter-parries, etc., it is wise to have the group practice without changing roles until everyone has mastered the sequence of action.

Stability in the Lunge

One of the most difficult techniques for many beginners to learn is to remain motionless in the lunge; to avoid pulling backward with the parry and swaying forward with the riposte. And yet this immobility should be taught first, for it requires less physical effort from the fencer to remain stationary, has carry-over value in

teaching a beginner to lead with the tip of the foil instead of with the shoulder, is essential to the use of the recovery and redoublement, and will enable her to concentrate her attention on the hand movements rather than dividing it between foil and feet. During the first lessons therefore, the following footwork is used when teaching foil technique.

Exercise I
Attacker: Lunge, remain in lunge, parry and riposte from that position. (One parry-riposte at first, two and three later.)
Defender: Parry and riposte from en guarde.

The instructor must stress the locked position of the back leg; the immobility of the body; and the complete reliance on the success of the parry alone for defense. It is important for this immobility to be mastered before proceeding to the next exercise. If the student establishes a faulty pattern of shifting her weight, or bending her back leg with her parry, the job of recovering into the en guarde is made more difficult because she fails to get adequate momentum from her push-off.

Recovery From the Attack

Sometimes, because her opponent's riposte is faster than the attacker's parry, the attacker will find it expeditious to recover from the lunge into the en guarde as she parries. This action increases the distance and thus, the time through which the defender's riposte must travel. (This would force the defender to lunge with her riposte in order to hit. See Exercise III.)

Exercise II
Attacker: Lunge, recover with a parry, riposte with the lunge.
Defender: Parry-riposte from an en guarde.

It is necessary for beginners to slow down the rhythm of their parry-riposte in order to complete the parry with the placement of the forward foot in the en guarde position, and to complete the extension of the riposte before the lunge. The instructor should stress that the parrying movement should not be started until the recovery is almost complete. The arm *should be* withdrawn to an engaged position first, rather than making a premature attempt to parry which is easily deceived.

A complete recovery should be the goal, not a half-hearted step back and forth. The exercise should not be practiced too long for it is too easy to establish a pattern of lunge, recover, lunge, recover, which is unnecessarily strenuous. The students should be told that in

fencing, one recovers only when one wants maximum time for the completion of the parry, and that in a bout whenever the fencer feels that she is fast enough to parry in the lunge position, she should do so.

Smooth Continuous Riposte Lunge

Exercise III

Attacker: Lunge; recover with a delayed parry, riposte in the en
Defender: guarde.
Parry the attack, riposte, and as the riposte is not immediately parried, lunge; and parry in the lunge position.

In this action the attacker, for the purpose of this exercise, should delay her parry slightly in order to make it obvious to her opponent that there is a chance to score a riposte. When first learning this exercise, the attacker should complete her attack and then recover without defending herself. The instructor should carefully check to make sure that each defender is extending her arm fully before lunging.

When the complete pattern has become a little easier, have the attacker use her own discretion in deciding whether to recover or not. If the attacker has not withdrawn a simple extension will suffice to hit, if she has withdrawn, a lunge will be necessary. The goal should be to make the lunge a smooth uninterrupted continuation of the extension even when the necessity for the lunge is only apparent at the last second, and to use the lunge only when it is necessary.

Next, keeping the foil actions extremely slow in order to make it possible to correctly coordinate the feet with the hand, have each fencer make from three to four actions in each phrase; vary the sequence of recoveries and lunges, and use a lunge only when necessitated by the opponent's withdrawal.

Retreat and Parry

It is very important that each fencer be taught that one should sometimes retreat while parrying. This is necessary when the fencer realizes that the attacker is too close, or when the attacker has an extremely fast attack which has been successful in the past.

Exercise IV

Attacker: Lunge.
Defender: Retreat and parry-riposte.

The footwork of the defender should be quick and short, the timing being, "And 1," rather than, "1, 2". Her feet should move

quickly enough so that her parry is completed with the replacement of the front foot. When these actions are mastered, they may be continued as in Exercise II and then as in Exercise III.

Redoublement

The use of a redoublement is imperative when the defender retreats out of reach as one attacks. In order to redouble, the fencer, from the lunge position, brings her back leg up and places it in the en guarde position, and if distance makes it necessary, lunges again. Throughout this action the attacker's foil arm remains extended in order to maintain right of way. If the fencer does not make use of the redoublement and simply recovers from her lunge in the usual manner, it is impossible for her opponent to advance to her own original position, recovering the lost ground. This makes it possible for her to repeat the same action over and over again, until the attacker wearies and slows down, making it easy for the defender to score with an unexpected retaking of the attack.

Exercise IV

Attacker: Lunge, recover and lunge (redoublement).
Defender: Retreat, wait for second lunge, parry-riposte.

Caution the attacker to complete the first lunge before redoubling, and remind her that she must not anticipate her opponent's retreat. Sometimes the defender will retreat and then, as the attacker draws her back leg up to the en guarde position, will parry and riposte. In this case, the attacker must parry and start her riposte before she lunges again. Her timing for the parry depends entirely on her opponent's timing. If the defender parries the original lunge as she retreats, the attacker must parry as she draws her back leg up to the en guarde position.

The students should be taught that the essence of fencing is the use of strategy. Complete mastery of footwork is absolutely necessary for this purpose. Often a superior fencer (in foil technique) can be outwitted by an opponent who keeps changing distance. Fencers should be taught to use their footwork as an indispensable offensive and defensive aid.

Motivational Techniques of Fencing

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One of the most difficult phrases of teaching fencing to beginners is motivating the student to practice skills. The task of repeating the same basic skills often becomes a chore and the student no longer desires to learn. If she can find an interesting means of practicing, her skill will more than likely increase, and with the development of skill the student will be able to enjoy fencing.

Specific Techniques

The more ways of motivating the student that the instructor can provide, the more anxious the student will find herself to practice her skills. The following techniques are functional devices in that they are usable for all individuals regardless of skill level. They may be instituted in the class program as soon as the beginner learns the advance, retreat, and lunge.

1. Fencing Manikin. A tailor's manikin can be purchased to be used as a target on which attacks can be practiced. An old mask ready for discard will serve as the head. Allow the students to dress it appropriately for fencing and, if they wish, even name it. This simply adds to the enjoyment of using it. Allow the wheels to remain on it so it will move when "attacked." This provides a realistic picture of the continual changing of distance commonly found in bouting. The manikin can be easily wheeled into a corner or closet for convenient storage.

2. Ball on String. Suspend a plastic ball (approximately the size of a golf ball) from the ceiling. The use of artist's wire is suggested since it is extremely strong. The ball should be four to five feet from the floor. The students can then practice lunging or thrusting at the ball while it is moving. This will give the students opportunity to practice hitting a moving object, focusing on a small target, and judging a constantly changing distance.

3. Wall Targets. Small plywood wooden targets 12 x 12 inches can be fixed to the walls. They should be padded and covered with canvas; they are easily constructed and are inexpensive. A red

"heart" or balloon can be attached to the face of the target. Students can use these targets to practice all attacks and work on attacking distance simultaneously.

4. Body Targets. Using a safety pin or masking tape, students can pin a balloon or "heart" on some part of their target. The partner, using any attack, tries to break the balloon or hit the "heart."

5. Mirrors. If the room in which you are teaching has mirrors, take advantage of them. They are particularly useful for students who have poor alignment in the on guard or lunge positions. Hearing the verbal correction reinforced with the visual one provides an excellent motivational experience for the student. Students may also use the mirrors to "shadow fence."

Drilling in various formations, changing the area in which the students are taught, and giving fencing time at the end of each drilling session are other experiences which motivate the student and make her class time more exciting.

Several other means of motivating the student have been suggested by Spears[1] and Lindsey[2].

Whatever the method one uses, it is important that students are kept interested and that they can participate successfully in fencing.

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[1]Spears, Betty, "Teaching Bouting Through Lead-Up Games." DGWS *Bowling-Fencing-Golf Guide* 1958-1960, pp. 84-85.

[2]Lindsey, Ruth. "Teaching Devices." DGWS *Bowling-Fencing-Golf Guide* 1958-1960, pp. 72-73.

Teaching Devices

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Early in the fencing season, before the student is ready for combat or for practice with a partner, it is difficult to motivate her to practice alone. In order to make individual work more palatable, both for the beginner and advanced fencer, and to add variety to mass drills "called" by the instructor, I have put to use a few practice devices which add realism to the drill.

I. **Fencing Dummy**. An easily constructed, inexpensive apparatus which can be built by a handy instructor or the school carpenter. It consists of a blade (use an old discarded or broken blade with the point taped) inserted in a 2" X 4" arm which protrudes from a padded (use an old plastron) plywood board. (See details of construction below.) The dummy can be mounted on the wall or supporting columns in such a way that it may be taken down when not in use; or, by holding the blade in place with a pommel or nut, the blade may be removed easily.

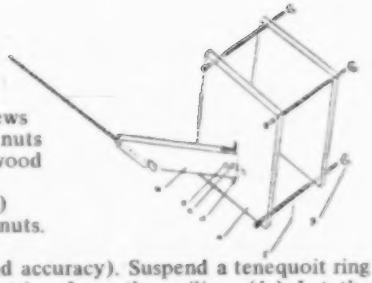
Suggestions for using: Draw a red "heart" on the target and have your students practice their thrusts and lunges at it. They soon learn to gauge the distance of their attacks. All of the attacks where the opponent has a bent arm, as well as the beat parries may be practiced.

I find it particularly useful when there is an odd-numbered class, leaving one girl without a partner; or, when a student is having difficulty executing a particular technique, such as a disengage. Rather than monopolizing another person's time, send the student to practice her fingering exercise on the dummy's blade.

In addition, I sometimes demonstrate new techniques on the dummy instead of selecting a student for a partner. This allows the student to devote her attention to the demonstration. *Caution:* a mask should be worn when fencing with the dummy.

Fencing Dummy Legend

a–one 21" X 2" X 4"
b–four ½" X 2" angle irons
c–eight 1/8" X ¾" wood screws
d–eight 1/8" stove bolts and nuts
e–two 16" X 18" X ⅜" plywood
f–four ¼" pin bolts (ladder bolts of threaded steel rods)
g–four ¼" washers and wing nuts.



II. The Ring (for speed and accuracy). Suspend a tenequoit ring (or similar substitute) by a string from the ceiling. (1.) Let the students practice their thrusts and lunges trying to hit the hole. This is good practice if they have a tendency to "chop" as they thrust. The point must be properly lowered before the final movements in order to succeed on the target. (2.) A partner, or the instructor, may hold the ring to one side, then drop it so that it swings in an arc. The object is to lunge, hitting the hole as it passes. The student must focus the eyes straight ahead so as not to anticipate and follow the ring with the blade. (3.) Good footwork practice: start the ring swinging, assume an on guard position and advance as it swings away, retreat as it comes toward you; more advanced fencers can "shadow fence" this way, executing parries as the ring "attacks," then countering with lunges, advance lunges, etc.

III. Drop the Handkerchief (speed and accuracy). Have a partner, or the instructor, stand on a chair and drop a weighted handkerchief while the fencer (eyes focused straight ahead) attempts to impale it with a properly timed lunge.

IV. Target Practice (accuracy). Hang an old carpet a few inches from the wall (so that it will "give" when hit); draw circles on it; have the fencers practice their lunges for accuracy against it, or combine with footwork to help them learn to gauge distance.

Teaching Bouting Through Lead-Up Games

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Methods of teaching fencing are traditionally formal and are fundamentally based on the premise that learning to fence requires a relatively long period of time. Frequently, the accepted patterns of formal drill which are used to bridge the gap between learning the fundamental techniques to bouting situations, do not provide sufficient motivation for the average fencer in instructional classes in physical education. By utilizing lead-up games for this phase of the instruction, fencing teachers will find a high degree of class interest and an atmosphere of fun prevailing. Lead-up games in fencing provide opportunities for the fencer to utilize fundamental fencing movements in a bouting situation, to enjoy the competitive element in fencing as soon as possible and to recognize the need for basic drills in fencing.

Some lead-up games may be utilized in pre-bouting teaching while others are suitable as bouting games which may be completed in a one class period. Several fencing lead-up games are described below. There are, of course, many others which may be adapted to the needs and interests of fencing classes.

Surprise Attack

This game may be used early in the fencing class to encourage the analysis of the opponent's attack. The class is divided into two rows facing each other. Each row acts as a team. Each fencer is instructed to acknowledge a touch against herself. Those fencers in row B turn their backs while those in row A gather around the instructor and are assigned a specific attack. The class is instructed that only fencers in row A may initiate the attack. The fencers in row B are to attempt to parry the attack and riposte. Fencers assume the on guard position. On the command "Attack," row A attacks. The action is stopped when row B has had the opportunity to attempt a parry and riposte. The game is scored by counting the touches scored against row B and the ripostes scored against row A. The higher score wins. Row B is then assigned an attack. The game continues by assigning surprise attacks alternately to the teams. The team with the higher score at the end of the period wins.

Quick Elimination

This game provides the opportunity to determine a class winner within one class period. It may be used as a last day tournament or at holiday time, and a small prize may be awarded to the winner.

Round I–0–no losses

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

The class is divided into rows facing each other. The class is instructed to fence *one* touch. The fencer who is touched acknowledges the touch and then with his fencing partner retires to the side of the room and sits down. On the command, "Fence," the class bouts according to the above directions. After all the fencers are seated the class moves to positions for Round II. In Round II a fencer who lost goes to one end of the line and fences another loser. A fencer who won goes to the other end of the line and fences a winner.

Round II–0–no losses; 1–one loss

1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Proceed as in Round I. After Round II the fencers with no losses continue to fence each other, the fencer with one loss fences competitors who also have one loss and fencers with two loses fence each other.

Round III–0–no losses; 1–one loss; 2–two losses

2 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 0
2 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 0

Proceed as in the other rounds. The diagram for Round IV will appear as follows.

Round IV–0–no losses; 1–one loss; 2–two losses; 3–three losses

3 3 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 0 0
3 3 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 0 0

Proceed as in the other rounds. After this round there will be two fencers who have had no losses. These fencers then fence a complete bout with the other class members acting as officials or observing. The winner of the final bout is the winner of the *Quick Elimination.*

King's Spot

The object of this game is to move to the *King's Spot* and remain there. The description below demonstrates the use of this game with a group of thirty fencers. It may be adapted to smaller or larger groups. Starting places are drawn by lot or assigned.

10	9	10	9	10	9
8	7	8	7	8	7
6	5	6	5	6	5
4	3	4	3	4	3
2	King's Spot	2	King's Spot	2	King's Spot

The fencers are instructed to start fencing on the command, "Fence." The fencer touched is to acknowledge the touch and then both fencers are to sit down in place with their masks on (for safety reasons). After everyone is seated the fencers move into position to fence the next touch in the following manner.

No. 2 and King's Spot—the winner remains in or moves to the King's Spot. The loser moves to Spot 10.

No. 3 and No. 4—the winner moves to the No. 2 or Challenger's Spot. The loser moves to or remains in Spot 4.

No. 5 and No. 6—the winner moves to Spot 3. The loser moves to or remains in Spot 6.

No. 7 and No. 8—the winner moves to Spot 5. The loser moves to or remains in Spot 8.

No. 9 and No. 10—the winner moves to Spot 7. The loser moves to Spot 9.

Play continues as for the first touch. Depending upon whether the players win or lose, they move to their respective positions for the next round. This continues for any designated length of time or number of rounds. The fencer who is in the King's Spot at the end of the playing time is declared the winner.

Techniques and Skills

A Conditioning Program for Women Fencers

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In discussing the International Fencing Championships and the Olympics such comments as these appear in *American Fencing:* "Our girls were outfenced–not by technique, but by training, determination, speed and the will to win. . . none of our girls was able to sustain her good fencing for a long enough period to be really effective against her obviously better trained opponents." There can be no substitute for training when one enters the competitive world with serious determination.

The problem confronting fencing coaches is twofold–to give technical instruction to their students and to develop the proper attitude toward gaining and maintaining fitness. The approach here is both physical and psychological. The student must be motivated to her optimum performance, and to the requisite training needed to maintain performance at this peak. The coach or trainer is important, but in the final analysis the performer is the single most important factor in determining success through application. If the beginning fencer is to continue into high-level competitive fencing a certain psychological toughness must be developed.

Csaba Elthes, in his article "Conditioning for Modern Fencing Competition," states that the rapid rise of the Russians in international competition is attributable to their conditioning program. "The Russians appropriated the Hungarian's modern athletic method of fencing, adjusted it to their own training system, and became in the shortest time in history one of the leading fencing nations. This grand breakthrough can be explained mainly by the conditioning for modern competition that the Russians have developed."[1] The Russians' conditioning program is divided into four basic parts:

[1] Elthes, Csaba. "Conditioning for Modern Fencing Competition," *American Fencing,* December 1959.

1. A basic period designed to increase stamina through gradual increase in the quantity and quality of exercise.

2. A formative period devoted to specialized training in the particular game for improvement of technique, tactics, and stamina.

3. A form development period intended through competition to raise the technical and tactical skill of the competitor to the top and keep it there.

4. A form maintenance period to dissipate the accumulated nervous strain acquired in competitions while maintaining physical fitness through exercise in supplementary sports.[2]

These basic ideas can easily be incorporated into any conditioning program. The fencing teacher has direct control over providing a progressive conditioning program and technical instruction. In the other two areas, control is not direct but is contingent upon existing conditions.

An exercise conditioning program should attempt to develop endurance; arm, leg, back, and abdominal strength; and flexibility. Any exercise program should begin with light exercises which are increased in accordance with the individual's state of fitness, rate of recovery, and age. Specific programs which have been developed may be found in Castello's book *Fencing*, and the Olympic conditioning program proposed by Arthur Tauber, a physical therapist, is reported in the April 1959 issue of *American Fencing*.

Examples of exercises helping to promote endurance are as follows: running in place with a steady increase in the number of runs, hopping on alternate feet, jumping in place, jumping with quarter turns, rope jumping, squat thrust, and the mountain climber.

Leg strength is essential in fencing. Some exercises which will assist in the development of leg muscles are various types of knee bends and any of the above exercises which place emphasis on leg movement. Although there is some controversy about the use of deep knee bends because of the possible damage to the knee joint, most of the authors who have written on conditioning programs for fencers have included this type of exercise. Since the knee is in a bent position in many of the techniques this can be a beneficial exercise if done correctly. Isometrics may also be used effectively for strength development. Abdominal and back strength may be increased through the use of sit-ups and trunk-raising exercises in a prone position. Arm strength may be improved through the proper execution of modified push-ups, and the squat thrust exercise mentioned above.

Flexibility exercises involving arm and body swings are beneficial. Some suggested exercises are vertical and horizontal arm swings and

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[2] *Ibid.*

trunk twisting. A good progression in the usual toe touching exercise is to touch the opposite toe, then increase the stretch by touching the floor behind the opposite heel. This is done to four counts: turn on 1, down on 2, up on 3 still turned, and back to position on 4. Bounces in a lunge position and various stretching exercises which begin from the en garde and proceed to the lunge position have proved useful in stretching the muscles activated most in fencing.

The basic techniques can serve as excellent conditioners as well as give the fencer practice in the basic movements. Some fencing authorities, while recognizing the need for general conditioning exercises, recommend that the greatest emphasis be placed on the practice of techniques.

Basic Offense

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ATTACKS

In fencing, as in other activities, a good offense is the best defense. The international rules define an attack as the initial movement of a sequence of play (this sequence is also called a phrase) which ultimately results in a touch. Basically, it consists of a forward movement of the weapons toward the valid target. Important functions of an attack are: (a) to put the opponent on the defense; (b) to control distance; (c) to control timing; (d) to control the play; and (e) to build confidence. Once undertaken, an attack must be determined and continuous until it ends either in a hit or in being parried.

SIMPLE ATTACKS. Simple attacks are those executed without any preceding feint or threatening motion. They can be divided into straight thrust, disengage, and cutover. A straight thrust is a direct attack into an open line. A disengage is an attack made from the closed line to the open line, your foil point passing under the opponent's blade, reaching around his hand. A cutover is a disengage attack in which your blade passes over the opponent's blade rather than under it.

All simple attacks should be made in one continuous movement, keeping your blade as close to the opponent's as possible. Wide motions lose control and waste time. Simple attacks, started within reaching distance, should land successfully, provided the opponent does not supplement his parry with a retreat. The attacker has taken the initiative and has the advantage in time.

Points To Remember

1. Proper timing and exact distance are essential.
2. Simple attacks are the most effective and yet the most difficult to perfect.
3. Speed is dependent on quickness in blending the extension of the arm with the lunge into one continuous action.
4. Your attack should take place when the line is being opened, rather than when it is being closed.
5. Your attack should occur upon the opponent's preparation.
6. Your hand and grip should be kept completely relaxed as you begin or you will give away the start of your attack.

FEINTS. A feint is any motion of the blade which leads the opponent to believe he is about to be attacked. The object of a feint is to provoke a parry, thus opening up the opponent's opposite line, into which you actually intend to attack. Such an attack is, of course, made by deceiving the parry.

Feints are usually made by extending the arm and threatening the opponent sufficiently to cause him to react. By making several simple direct attacks first, your feints will be more effective, since the opponent will then be conditioned to make a parry.

Points To Remember

1. Your feint must provide a parry.
2. Be ready for a counterattack.
3. Do not wait for the parry before completing your attack; keep ahead of it, but prolong your feint enough so that the opponent has time to react.
4. When more than one feint is made in immediate succession, accentuate the first one.

COMPOUND ATTACKS. Compound attacks are those composed of more than one action. The first action of a compound attack is intended to open a line which is closed, so as to hit in that line on a subsequent action. These first actions are made by feints or by actions on the blade, to draw reactions from the opponent, such as a premature (and perhaps, sloppily executed) parry. The principal uses of a compound attack are (a) to overcome a strong defense against simple attacks, and (b) to offer variation in one's pattern of attack.

Like simple attacks, compound attacks are predetermined in their composition. Once you have begun your planned sequence of actions, continue as planned, without waiting for the opponent's response to your initial action. He must not catch up with your blade.

The compound attack by feint. You can vary the positioning of your feints to provoke parries in whatever line you wish; for example, while engaged in six, a feint by disengage to the high line near the leading shoulder is likely to provoke a counter parry of six, while a feint to the inside at the height of the hand is more likely to provoke an opposition parry of four. Similarly, from an engagement in four, a feint well over in the six line, toward the back, is almost certain to provoke an opposition parry of six, while a close disengage to the high line will most likely provoke a counter of four.

The compound attack by preparation on the blade. Attacks with preparation on the blade are made to create a direct opening, or to

provoke a reaction, such as a parry or disengage, which is to be deceived. We shall consider beats, pressures, glides, binds, and envelopments. Keep in mind that your blade tapers and has different tempers. Therefore, we speak of three sections: the strong, near the guard; the middle; and the weak. Some fencing masters speak only of strong and weak, but the principle is the same.

Beat: A short, sharp blow against the opponent's blade. The blades are in only momentary contact. Made too wide, your beat can be easily deceived; it must be made close to the opponent's blade. Beats to open a line are made with your strong against the opponent's middle or weak. Beats preceding disengages are not made so strongly, allowing the opponent to respond with a parry.

Pressure: a holding and forcing action against the opponent's blade. Preparatory to a straight thrust, pressures are made with the strong part of your blade against the opponent's weak. Your middle may be used against the opponent's middle to provoke a reaction which is to be deceived, thus developing a compound attack.

Glide: a forward motion of your blade, maintaining contact with, and pressure against, the opponent's blade. Glides differ from pressures in that they are sliding actions that end with the weak or middle of the opponent's blade dominated by your strong, as you score the touch. Your hand must be kept above the height of the opponent's in order to establish and maintain control of the blade.

Bind: an action that carries the opponent's blade diagonally from a high line to a low line, or vice versa. The most common form of bind is made from the high to the low line and is usually combined with a gliding action to hit.

Envelopment: a circular action that carries the opponent's blade from a line of engagement around and back to the original engagement. The hit following the envelopment is usually made with a glide action.

Attacks made by taking the opponent's blade demand continuous control of that blade, such control being maintained with the strong part of your blade pressing against the weak part of his. This control can best be effected when the opponent has his arm extended stiffly in a threatening action.

In compound attacks, as in simple ones, the element of surprise is essential. Any motions, hesitations, or mannerisms on your part that might betray your intention to attack must be avoided. Otherwise, you leave yourself wide open to stop thrusts, time hits, or parries retreating. Some possible combinations are as follows:

Feint of straight thrust; disengage and lunge
Feint of disengage; deceive the parry and lunge
Feint of cutover; deceive the parry and lunge
Feint of disengage; deceive the counter, parry and lunge
Beat and straight lunge
Beat; disengage and lunge
Beat; cutover and lunge
Pressure; disengage and lunge
Pressure; cutover and lunge
Glide and straight lunge.

Points To Remember

1. On any attack, remember to keep your point out in front all the way.
2. Make your attack a continuous forward motion, without hesitation.
3. Make attacks with opposition against an opponent who is inclined to stop thrust or try for the time thrust.
4. Make attacks on the opponent's advance.
5. Be prepared to recover to guard if your attack is halted.
6. Make your feint or action on the blade forceful enough to draw a reaction from the opponent.
7. Be ready for a possible deceive or evasive action.
8. Be wary of a counterattack.
9. Keep control of the opponent's blade at all times.
10. Make your beats crisp and quick.
11. Keep your grip relaxed on the extension to add speed to the extension, help your control of the point, and permit a faster parry and return to guard if your attack fails.

ATTACKS ADVANCING. These are calculated compound attacks, started from out of distance or against an opponent who regularly retreats with his first parry. Exact coordination of the hands and feet is essential. The attack starts with the extension of the weapon in a feint or other blade action; the foot action follows. Thereafter the timing of the feet must be the same as that of the hand. The coordination of the movements in compound attacks is accomplished as follows:

A "one-two-three" attack advancing is made in three counts:
1. Extend in the feint; step out on the front foot
2. Deceive the parry and advance the rear foot
3. Deceive again and lunge.

A change-beat lunge attack is made in two counts:
1. Change-beat, with a jump advance
2. Lunge.

A "one-two" attack is made in two counts:

1. Make a feint of disengage, with a jump advance
2. Deceive the parry and lunge.

In compound attacks, emphasize the first movement and speed up as the attack progresses.

Points To Remember

1. Watch out for counterattacks.
2. Make attacks in a continuous forward motion, without hesitations.
3. Always start attacks from the point of the weapon.

RENEWED ATTACKS

The following actions are similar to the basic attacks, the only distinction being that they follow immediately upon an original attack that fails to reach:

1. Remise (or insistence)
2. Redoublement
3. Reprise (retaking the attack).

Like the original attack, the renewed attack can either be planned in advance or be a reaction on the spur of the moment to a defense that omits or delays the riposte. There must be no hesitation, no waiting for the parry to see how the riposte is going to be made. A renewed attack must follow the original attack immediately in order to have any chance of gaining the time necessary to make it valid, since renewed attacks do not have the right of way of original attacks and therefore must land well ahead of any riposte in order to be in time. It is wise to cover against a riposte when making a renewed attack. Note that it is easier to cover against a riposte that ends in the outside line of six than against one to the inside or low lines.

A *remise* is the immediate replacement of the point, in the original line of attack, without withdrawing the weapon or changing the distance. It is used against fencers who either leave the line open after a parry or make a wild, delayed, or compound riposte.

A remise should be made with opposition to prevent the riposte from landing. It can be made with opposition when the riposte is attempted by disengage to the outside line of six. The remise into the inside line of four is practical when covered with opposition, but is often effective without opposition. A remise into the outside line of six is difficult to carry off in most cases.

The *redoublement*, or replacement, differs from the remise in that the original line of attack remains closed and thus the renewed

attack must be made into a different line. At least one new blade action is required, such as a disengage, cutover, or beat. The redoublement is useful against fencers who keep the original line of attack closed by holding the parry without making a riposte.

The redoublement, like the remise, is normally made from within striking distance. The redoublement with a blade action such as a beat, glide, or bind is more effective and safe in preventing a riposte than is the straight thrust without a taking of the blade.

The *reprise,* or retaking of the attack, differs from the remise and redoublement in that distance between the fencers has been increased at the end of the unsuccessful original attack enough so as to require a recovery and lunge to continue. Hence it is sometimes easy to regard a reprise as a brand new attack. The distinction is one that causes difficulty only to directors. The recovery from the original lunge is likely to be made forward, and the renewed attack itself may be simple or compound. Attacks with action on the blade are useful here since they have the added advantage of preventing the defender from landing a riposte.

Points To Remember

1. Make renewed attacks against fencers who (a) make incomplete parries and do not riposte; (b) parry but fail to riposte, or parry and delay the riposte, or parry and make a wild riposte; (c) parry and try to a compound riposte; (d) parry and/or retreat but do not riposte.
2. Make renewed attacks with blade action or opposition to stop ripostes.
3. Renewed attacks should be premeditated.
4. For maximum effect, have your renewed attacks follow series of simple direct attacks.
5. Don't overdo renewed attacks; surprise is essential.

PROGRESSION OF LEARNING

It is useless to expect consistent progress from the fencing novice unless he possesses a firm grounding in the fundamentals of the sport. Fencing manuals are usually based on some natural progression of learning. The progression given here is a rationally ordered listing of fencing techniques, arranged from the simplest fundamentals to more and more complex moves. The order set down here is that derived from our own experience, in consultation with other fencing masters. We cannot stress too much that orderly progression in learning is of the utmost importance, being the only practical way to progress in fencing. For example, the lunge must be learned by itself before it can be combined with other actions in even a simple

attack; a simple attack must be mastered before a compound attack, etc. All this may seem obvious, but too often the pupil tries to go ahead before he has mastered the fundamentals. There is a great temptation for the beginner who has difficulty in mastering simple actions to attempt more complicated moves, especially to work on some favorite tricky attack that may serve him for awhile but will seriously limit his potential for development as a fencer.

Some small variations in the order presented here may be desired by the masters and indeed may be advisable for some fencers. Teaching the cutover, for example, probably had best be postponed with a fencer who shows a tendency to pull back his arm on the attack, since practicing the cutover may reinforce this fault and thereby produce a bad habit. Nevertheless, in general, the simple moves must be mastered before the complex, which are mostly built upon the simple ones.

Whether or not the master or the fencer decides to work strictly from this progression, some plan for development is essential. Few things are more time wasting and frustrating than haphazard skipping about from half-learned simple moves to complex ones for which the learner is unprepared.

Progressive Steps

1. Physical preparedness (warm-up, calisthenics, conditioning)
2. Footwork (without weapons, hand on hips) in (a) guard, (b) advance and retreat, and (c) lunge
3. Hand positions and actions (still without weapons) in (a) guard, (b) advance and retreat, and (c) lunge
4. Holding the weapon
5. The basic salute
6. Coordinating the extension of the arm with footwork in (a) guard, (b) advance, (c) retreat, (d) lunge, and (e) combinations of these actions
7. Hand position in guard of six and four
8. Learning measure (distance that can be reached) by lunging against a wall or another fencer
9. Studying limits of the valid and nonvalid targets and the lines of attack (outside, inside, high, and low)
10. Straight thrust
11. Engagements and changes of engagement
12. The disengage
13. The cutover

Basic Defense

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I. Simple parry (lateral parry)
   High Line — Hand breast high
   Point mouth-forehead
   Point moves width of the neck

   Low Line — Hand breast high
   Point at opponent's knee

II. Circular or counter parry 4-6 (7-8)
   Hand and point as above

III. Semicircular parry 4-7, 6-8, and vice versa
   Hand and point as above

Teaching Progressions

Simple parry: form 2 lines A and B engaged in 4

1. On "1" A extends and disengages
   On "2" A lunges–B parries 6 (later ripostes)
   On "3" A recovers–go through all simple parries as above.
2. On "1" A extends and lunges–B parries (ripostes)
   On "2" A recovers

Circle and half-circle parries may be done as above.

Teaching Suggestions

1. To have the proper mechanical relationship between the defending and the attacking blades, the hand must be breast high and the point at least the height of the mouth (forehead).

2. The hand travels laterally and the point with it far enough to close the line.

3. To make circular parries, use the finger (or wrist) to make the circle. The point returns to its starting point, passing *under* the opposing blade.

Advanced Techniques

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I. Compound attacks
   A. 1-2–feint of disengage and deceive a simple parry
   B. Doublé–feint of disengage and deceive a circular parry
   C. 1-2–low-high and vice versa in both inside and outside lines
   D. Coupé and deceive–Coupé and doublé
   E. Beat and deceive–Beat and doublé, etc.
II. Compound parries (any combination using more than one parry)
   A. Two or more simple parries–4-6, 6-4, etc.
   B. Simple and circular and vice versa–simple 4, counter 4, simple 6, counter 6, etc., and vice versa
   C. Two or more circular parries–counter 4–counter 4, counter 6–counter 6, etc.
   D. Simple and half circle–simple 4 half circle to 7, simple 6 half circle to 8, etc., and vice versa
   E. Counter and half circle–counter 4 half circle back to 7, counter 6–half circle back to 8.
III. Indirect and compound ripostes
   Disengage–1-2–doublé, etc.
IV. Stop thrust–time thrust–countertime
V. Actions on the blade
VI. Attacks on the march–advance and lunge. Balestra–lunge
VII. Remise–reprise

Teaching Progressions

Compound parries. Use organizational patterns from "Basic Defense" with additional counts. The parries may later be practiced by having the attacker recover and parry while the defender ripostes with a lunge. Lines may later be alternated by combining counter with simple parries.

Compound attacks. Organize as in defense except now attack:

1-2 form 2 lines A and B engaged in 4
1. On "1" A extends and disengages
   On "2" B parries–A evades and lunges
   On "3" A recovers–go through all compound attacks as above
2. On "1" A extends and B parries–A deceives and lunges
   On "2" A recovers

Teaching Suggestions

To execute effective compound parries, practice to develop a feeling for the place at which one would expect to encounter the opposing blade; if it is not met, it will not be, so parry again–with simple, counter, or half circle. Retreaters (chronic) may be forced to parry by placing them on guard with the back foot against the wall.

Good Fencing Through Good Footwork

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In today's competitive fencing, speed is of the utmost importance. To achieve speed, good footwork and proper balance are prime requisites. It is, therefore, essential to begin with good form. A fencer who is placed properly in the *en garde* position and is able to move freely both in and from this position, should be able to develop speed and ultimate competence in tournaments.

The classical *en garde* position calls for right angle placement of the feet with the heels about one and one-half feet apart. The knees are bent outward so that an imaginary line could be drawn from the knee to just forward of the arch of each foot. Body weight should be evenly distributed between both legs with the torso erect and in perfect profile. From the very beginning it should be stressed that the head be held erect and in line with the spine, profiled as the torso, with no tendency to lean either forward, backward, or especially, sideways. Shoulders should be relaxed with the weapon arm slightly extended. The upper part of the rear arm is held slightly below shoulder height with the forearm bent at right angles to it, and the hand held in a neat but relaxed position. From this basic position, the fencer will make all her moves and will return to this position when a movement is completed. It is most important, therefore, that the position be maintained correctly and that pupil or teacher make no attempt to alter it for the sake of comfort. This stance has evolved through the centuries as the one most practical for fencing, and if properly taken it should also be the most comfortable. As the legs strengthen and develop, there will be no problems in holding the stance for long periods of time.

The fencer moves forward with an *advance* and backward with a *retreat*. To advance, the front foot is lifted and moved ahead and the back foot is also lifted and placed down so that the fencer has moved forward a distance of approximately one foot. She arrives at her new destination in her original stance. This is most important—the distance between the feet should never vary from that of the original *en garde* position. The retreat is the reverse of the advance—back foot is lifted, placed down, front foot follows, and original position is regained. At no time should there by any shuffling or

sliding of the feet, nor should the feet be lifted too high off the ground—one inch is quite enough. The advance and retreat should, therefore, be crisp and tidy steps.

The *lunge* requires a rapid forward movement of the front foot, with the body being propelled forward by a swift extension of the rear leg. The rear arm is snapped straight in a line parallel to the back leg, and the front arm is extended as the front foot begins to leave the ground, or slightly before, but never later. The movement of the forward foot when it meets the ground after an advance or lunge should always be one of heel first, precisely as we would take an ordinary step in walking; the heel arrives first and the foot rolls down until it assumes a flat-to-the-ground position. Walking is a very natural thing; the foot work movements described here will also become natural if practiced sufficiently and correctly.

Line drills should be given frequently to the beginning fencer. By constant practice of the advance, retreat, and lunge, the young fencer will be able to move easily in his later fencing endeavors. Foot exercises can be varied—a series of advances can be followed by a lunge; after recovery, a retreat and a lunge, or two retreats, one advance and lunge. Any combination of the basic steps can be used. However, the pupil should always maintain her lunge for a second or two. This will develop strength in her legs and increase the sense of balance. Since the exericses are done on command, the instructor should attempt to vary not only the movements, but also the speed with which the command is given. This will avoid any kind of mechanical execution and will keep the fencer concentrating on not only the particular movement, but also when it should be done. During the drill the instructor can and should make frequent breaks to correct any error in form or execution. This will give the fencer a rest period which is quite necessary in exercises like these. Errors will be quite common among beginners and the instructor should be particularly aware of the following mistakes which can, if done consistently without correction, result in stunting the fencer's growth not only for a short period, but possibly forever.
Here are some key errors.

Starting the lunge with the body first. By doing this the fencer not only disturbs the entire balance of the movement, but will present her opponent with a nice juicy target long before her point approaches her adversary.

Letting the head drift over to the side. Once the head is not held correctly, a weight shift exists. It is quite simple for the fencer to compensate for the shift, but as she does this she puts additional strain on muscles (particularly shoulder muscles) which should be left free for easy control of the weapon.

A too rapid recovery from the lunge. The lunge has been devised to carry the point of the weapon to the adversary's target. By drilling in rapid recovery, one is exercising a negative point of view—that is, that one's attack is going to be parried and a quick recovery is necessary to defend one's self. It is much better to drill in a positive fashion—that is, let the fencer assume she will hit with her lunge; make her get out there and hold. With this positive point of view, she will hit more likely than not, and the need to recover and defend will be minimized.

Laziness in using the rear leg. In making a good lunge the rear knee must be snapped straight, forcefully and rapidly. A bent knee at the conclusion of the lunge indicates that the fencer is not using her rear leg. Unless a fencer develops this movement correctly at the beginning of her training, she will never be able to increase the speed and power of her attack.

Incorrect position of the rear foot. The back foot should be flat to the floor at the completion of the lunge. There should be no roll-over onto the instep, and a minimum amount of drag. A rolled over foot does not support the body and delays recovery. A dragging foot shortens and does not lengthen the lunge.

Attempting to profile the body by pulling back the rear shoulder. It is preferable to show more target than to have a strained position. Poor profiling of the torso can be easily corrected by adjusting the hips into the proper line rather than by pulling back the shoulders.

The swallow tail look. Last but not least is the jutting back side. In assuming the sitting position required of the *en-garde* there is a tendency for the beginner to arch her back. This should be corrected immediately by having the fencer keep her back straight from top to bottom, and, if necessary, tucking the hips in a bit.

By watching for and correcting these common errors in form and footwork, a coach is giving the pupil the best fundamental training possible. This training will enable the fencer to develop and grow properly, and will make the learning of all subsequent movements, however complicated, a more simple and enjoyable process.

Bouting Tactics for the Beginner

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Once a beginning fencer has learned to perform a variety of attacks and parries, she will want to test her ability to use these skills in a bout situation. At this point a typical question may be, "How do I know which attack to use?" or "How do I begin?"

Offense

Let us assume that you, this hypothetical fencer, can properly execute a straight thrust, disengage, cut-over, one-two, and double. Each of these five attacks may be preceded by a beat, making the selection from ten possible attacks a major chore.

A good way to begin a bout is to make a convincing feint to an open line to test for reactions. The feint must look like an attack in order to draw a true response. The opponent will probably react to this feint in one of the following ways:

1. *By not moving at all.* This means either the feint was not convincing or that the other fencer thinks you will not try anything as simple as a direct attack. Now is the time for a fast, smooth, direct attack if you can get within lunging distance.
2. *By a direct parry.* Make a feint to draw the parry which you will deceive to score with a disengage. This may be a straight thrust disengage, or a one-two attack.
3. *By a counter parry.* Make a feint and deceive this parry with a double.
4. *By a retreat.* Make a two-part attack with an advance.

The previous actions are representative of those which may be used effectively in bouting. An effective technique is to build one attack on another. It is wise to use simple attacks first when you can get within scoring distance and then progress to compound attacks. There is a tendency to think that you must change tactics after scoring but this is not true. If an attack works, use it until it fails. Between attempts to score you may change distance, feint, beat-extend, or otherwise change tempo until you once again feel that you can score as you did before.

When a previously effective simple attack is parried, it is time to change tactics by building to this no longer usable action. What this means is that you can feint to the place your opponent is now

defending and deceive the expected parry with a second action so that you can now make a feint of a straight-thrust, disengage; a one-two; double; a cut-over; a disengage to the high or low line; and so on.

If this compound attack works, keep using it until it fails. It may fail either because your opponent no longer parries the first action or because she parries both actions. If she no longer parries the first action, return to your direct attacks. If a second parry is added, you may deceive that one also, but be careful not to get too complicated or *you* may be hit before you complete your attack.

By limiting yourself to one or two attacks you provide ample opportunity to perfect such actions in a bouting situation. This means that when the opportunity arrives, you must immediately seize that opportunity to score. By using a given attack again and again you will gain confidence in your ability to use it when you really need a touch. Whenever you practice bouting keep your attacks relatively simple. Use two or three actions until they work well for you.

It is important to feel confident of scoring when you attack. If you entertain the slightest doubt of the success of an attack, you are liable to withdraw an instant before you reach. You may also attack with enough hesitation to slow your action so that it lacks the drive necessary to score. A direct attack must be made with conviction in order to be effective.

It is also essential to know your lunging distance. If you are out of distance it is a waste of energy to make an attack which will fall short of the target. Fencers often fence just out of distance, and they often retreat out of distance as a part of their defense, so it is important to learn to make an effective advance-attack or ballestra-attack. The beginner often makes the mistake of fencing too close to her opponent. Although you will not have to work so hard to reach from a closer position, you are more easily hit when you are close. If you make a full lunge from less than lunging distance, you will probably miss your target, so learn the correct distance and do not carelessly allow yourself to be drawn too close.

Defense

To avoid being touched is the first objective in bouting. Any time spent in developing small, neat, but effective parries will be time well spent.

Try not to parry feints unless you use a variety of parries. Your opponent will feel you out by making feints so try to confuse her by changing your reactions. Try to parry when the lunge is on its way, then make it fast and clean. This makes it difficult to plan

compound attacks against you. Add this to changing distance and you will be difficult to hit.

Don't be afraid to retreat out of distance of an attack, but never go farther back than necessary or too much ground will be lost and a *riposte* may be impossible. By stepping just out of range you can make a fast parry and *riposte* to score before your opponent fully recovers her distance.

Keep on the move. If you plant yourself in one spot, even if you move your hand, you allow the other fencer to get set which is usually a mistake. You may also find it hard to move dynamically from a state of immobility. If you move often and in a relaxed, light way, you will find you are ready to move at any moment the need or opportunity arises. By being *always* ready to move your pleasure in fencing will increase as you become more alert to any and all possibilities.

Focus your eyes on the center of your opponent's target rather than on the blade. The blade moves too far and too fast to see well. If your eyes follow a large, lateral movement of the blade, the point can return to line quicker than your eyes so you may miss a critical action. By focusing on a central point you will be able to see the whole action develop rather than just a segment of it.

These cues to bouting strategy only scratch the surface of an interesting subject. Try to use this information as a guide line from which to expand. Sound strategy calls for sound technique. In a word, keep it simple and neat.

Evaluation

Fencing Knowledge Test

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The knowledge test which follows was devised to test college students who had completed a beginning course in fencing consisting of forty-five 30-minute sessions. The course content was as follows:

1. *Footwork:* On guard; lunge and recovery; advance and retreat; advance and lunge; lunge, recovery forward, and second lunge.
2. *Guard lines:* Supination, 4,6,7,8; pronation, 1,2,3,5.
3. *Offensive techniques:* Attacks—simple direct; simple indirect; disengage, coupé. Compound—one-two, one-two-three, double, feints followed by deception of a parry. Preparations on the blade—beat, press, bind, envelopment. Secondary attacks—remise. Counter offensive attacks—stop-thrust, time-thrust.
4. *Defensive techniques:* (French parries: 4,6,7,8,2): Lateral parries: 4,6,7,8,2; Counter: 4,6. Opposition.
5. *Ripostes:* Direct and indirect.
6. *Knowledge of rules:* Terminology, scoring, judging touches, right of way, directing.

FENCING KNOWLEDGE TEST

Part I: General

Place one answer from the right hand column into the blank in the left hand column. Each answer may be used only once.

1. Only weapon fenced by women	a. Dueling sword
2. Great fencing master	b. Hungarian and Italian
3. Target includes entire body	c. Epée
4. Governs fencing in United States	d. Foil
5. Predecessor of the épée	e. Italian and French
6. Touch with tip and upper one-third of blade is good	f. AFLA
7. Two common schools of fencing	g. Saber
	h. Santiago
	i. Castello
	j. AAU

Part II. Attacks

8. Attack	a. Straight thrust
9. Simple indirect	b. Preparation
10. Attack of one blade movement	c. Bind
11. Press	d. Lunge
12. Double	e. Compound
13. Direct attack	f. Simple
14. Preparation	g. Offensive action
	h. Coupé
	i. Riposte

Part III. Parries

15. 1-2	a. Opposition
16. Parry	b. Clockwise
17. Counter-quarte (right-handed)	c. Offensive action
18. Parry used for coulé	d. Lateral
19. Parry sixte	e. Defensive action
20. Semi-circular	f. Counterclockwise
21. Counter-quarte (left-handed)	g. Counter
	h. Parry septime
	i. Parry quinte

Part IV. Terms and Rules

Select the best answer to the question and place the corresponding letter on the blank in front of the question.

22. Where is the valid target area in foil for both men and women?
    a. Entire jacket plus bib of mask
    b. Area between neck and groin, minus arms
    c. Extended jacket, front and back, plus bib.

23. In which lines is the hand held in supination?
    a. 1,4,6,7
    b. 2,3,5,1
    c. 8,6,7,4
    d. 4,6,3,5
    e. 1,2,4,7

24. Which of the following lines, one high and one low, accompany each other on the body?
    a. 6 and 8
    b. 4 and 6
    c. 4 and 3
    d. 3 and 5.

25. If you are protecting the low inside line with the hand in supination, you are on guard in which line?
    a. Prime
    b. Octave
    c. Septime
    d. Quarte.

26. When protecting the low outside line with the hand in pronation, a person is on guard in which line?
    a. Seconde
    b. Octave
    c. Septime
    d. Sixte.

27. Which lines are closest to the nonfoil arm?
    a. 4 and 6
    b. 6 and 8
    c. 7 and 8
    d. 7 and 4.

28. How must a valid touch in foil be scored?
    a. On the body
    b. With the foible of the blade
    c. On the jacket
    d. With the tip.

29. When is the number of touches ordinarily required for victory in women's and men's foil?
    a. 4 for women, 5 for men
    b. The same, four touches
    c. 3 for women, 4 for men.

30. How is a riposte defined?
    a. An attack
    b. An offensive action after any parry
    c. A defensive action
    d. An offensive action following a successful counter parry
    e. An offensive action following a successful parry.

31. What are the two types of ripostes?
    a. Simple and compound
    b. Straight thrust and riposte
    c. Disengage and parry
    d. Immediate and compound.

32. What is a stop-thrust?
    a. A counter offensive action
    b. Used to gain a period of time
    c. Arrives before the final movement of a compound attack is initiated
    d. Anticipates the line of attack and closes it in such a way as to hit the opponent.

A and B are fencing in the following situations:

33. Fencer A disengages and hits fencer B at the same time that B parries, misses the blade but ripostes and touches A an instant later. What is the decision?
    a. Touch against B
    b. Touch against A
    c. Nothing done
    d. Foul.

34. Fencer B executes a coulé. Fencer A parries and ripostes. Fencer B parries the riposte and hits A's arm with her riposte. What is the decision?
    a. Touch against A
    b. Foul
    c. Touch against B
    d. Nothing done.

35. Fencer A disengages with a bent arm and hits with a bent arm. Fencer B at the same instant does a 1-2 correctly and hits A. What is the decision?
    a. Touch against B
    b. Foul
    c. Nothing done
    d. Touch against A.

36. Fencer A performs a coulé-coupé-disengage. Fencer B parries an opposition, lateral, and lateral parries. Fencer A deceives the final lateral parry and hits B. What attack has fencer A used to hit B?
    a. Coulé-coupé-disengage
    b. Coulé-coupé-double
    c. Coulé-coupé-1-2
    d. Coulé-coupé-disengage-straight thrust.

37. Fencer B does a beat intending to attack with a beat-disengage. At the moment fencer B beats the blade, fencer A extends her arm and hits B. What is the decision?
    a. Touch on A, attack was beat-disengage
    b. Nothing done
    c. Touch on B, attack was a stop-thrust
    d. Touch on B, attack was a time-thrust.

38. Fencer B disengages. Fencer A parries but delays her riposte. B remains on the lunge and hits A. What attack was used?
    a. Disengage
    b. Redoublement
    c. Remise
    d. Straight thrust.

39. Fencer A executes a counter, lateral, and a lateral parry in order, and stops the attack. What attack has fencer B used?
    a. 1-2-3
    b. Double-disengage
    c. Double-1-2
    d. 1-2-double.

40. Fencer B executes a lateral, a counter, and a lateral parry and stops the attack. What attack has fencer A used?
    a. Coulé-disengage
    b. Coupé-double
    c. Double-disengage
    d. Disengage-double-disengage.

Part V. Fencing Situations

In the following series select the best answer to each question and place the corresponding letter on the blank in front of the question. *Three* touches constitute a bout.

41. A and B are fencing. B touches A. A touches B immediately following a touch on the arm. B touches A with the flat of the blade. The time limit is reached. How is the bout scored?

	A	B
a.	111 / L	1 / W
b.	1 / W	0 / L
c.	0 / W	1 / L
d.	111 / L	11 / W.

42. C and D are fencing. D touches C. C touches D. D touches C. C disengages and hits D but D does a time thrust and hits C. D disengages, C parries, D goes on in and hits while still in the lunge. How is the bout scored?

	C	D
a.	111 / L	11 / W
b.	111 / L	1 / W
c.	1111 / W	1 / L
d.	11 / W	111 / L.

43. A and D are fencing. A touches D. A touches D. D touches A. D touches A. Time limit is reached. The bout is begun again and A forces D off the strip after a warning has been given. How is the bout scored?

	A	D	
a.	11 W	11 L	
b.	11 W	111 L	
c.	11	11	incomplete.

44. B and C are fencing. B and C touch simultaneously, double touch is ruled by the director. B stops before the command "halt" is given and is immediately touched by C. B touches C after a foul is committed. C touches B. B hits C with the flat of the blade and then with the tip. C touches B. Time limit is reached. How is the bout scored?

	B	C
a.	111 L	1 W
b.	111 L	11 W
c.	1111 L	11 W
d.	111 W	11 W.

45. In questions 39 through 42, which person won the tournament? Each person had two bouts.
a. A
b. B
c. C
d. D.

A Fencing Knowledge Test

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The knowledge test which following was devised to test college students who have concluded a course in fencing consisting of thirty 40-minute sessions. The content of the course is as follows:

I. Footwork and basic body positions

En guarde
Lunge and recovery
Advance; retreat
Advance and lunge; retreat and lunge
Lunge, recovery forward, and second lunge

II. Offensive Techniques

A. Attacks
Direct: Thrust; beat thrust
Indirect: Disengage; beat disengage
Composite: One, two
One, two, three
Feints followed by deceive of direct parry
Double (feint of disengage followed by deceive of counter-parry)

Pressure: Coulé or glide
Bind
Envelopment

B. Ripostes
1. Direct 2. Disengage 3. One, two

III. Defensive Techniques. French Parries (4, 6 also low line)
1. Direct 2. Counter 3. Opposition

IV. Analysis of appropriate defense or offense to be used against various techniques and weaknesses in form.

V. Knowledge of Rules

Costume and equipment	Judging touches
Terminology	Right of way
Scoring	Directing

The course content is covered through the following methods:

Analysis, demonstration and practice of techniques and of simple fencing situations and tactics
Distribution of mimeographed fencing terminology*
Discussion of rules and officiating
Fencing competition conducted by and among the students

FENCING KNOWLEDGE TEST

I. DIRECTIONS: Write T before the statement if it is true. Write F before the statement if wholly or partially false.

(F) 1. The primary function of the director is to judge materiality of touches.
(F) 2. The director may only halt the bout upon receiving a signal to do so from a judge.
(T) 3. When a fencer has her arm extended and her point threatens her opponent's valid target, the opponent must execute an action on the blade in order to gain the right of way.
(T) 4. The rules require the tip of the foil to be taped at all times.
(F) 5. After any halt by the director, action is always resumed at the center of the strip.
(F) 6. When fencers are placed on guard before the signal to fence, they should be positioned so that their foils are in contact.
(T) 7. There is no limit to the number of fouls a fencer may score.
(F) 8. During a bout the fencers change sides each time one of the fencers has scored two touches.
(F) 9. The judges should signal the director to halt only when good touches are scored.
(F) 10. During a competition a fencer should call "Touch", whenever she thinks her opponent has touched.
(T) 11. Penalty touches are never subtracted from the offending fencer's score but are added to her opponent's.
(T) 12. Against a pressure attack in which the attacker has gained control of her opponent's weapon, the appropriate defensive action would be a counter-parry.
(T) 13. When one fencer parries an attack but does not riposte, there is no need for the other to parry in order to gain the right of way.

*NSGWS, *Official Individual Sports Guide*, 1952-54, p. 91.

	A	B	C
A		IIII / W	I / L
B	II / L		I / L
C	IIII / W	IIII / W	

(T) 14. According to the score sheet "A" has defeated "B" by 2 touches.

(F) 15. According to the score sheet "C" has lost two bouts.

II. COMPLETION

(simple indirect) 1. The disengage lunge is an example of a . . . . . attack.

(simple direct) 2. Beat lunge is an example of a . . . . . attack.

(pressure) 3. The coulé or glide is an example of a . . . . . attack.

(composite) 4. The "1, 2" is an example of a . . . . . attack.

(simple indirect) 5. Beat disengage lunge is an example of a . . . . . attack.

(1½) 6. The director has a numerical vote of . . . . . .

(5 min.) 7. The time limit for an official women's bout is . . . . . .

(parry) 8. A defensive movement that blocks or deviates an offensive action is a . . . . . .

(riposte) 9. An offensive action made by a fencer who has just parried an attack is a . . . . . .

(sabre, epee) 10. The two fencing weapons used in men's competition, other than foil, are . . . . . and . . . . . .

(deceive) 11. Fencer A avoids Fencer B's attempted beat by disengaging. This is called a . . . . . .

(feint) 12. Fencer A extends in the inside line in an attempt to provoke Fencer B to open her oustide line. The technique used by Fencer A is called a . . . . . .

(ready, Fence) 13. Once the fencers are on guard, the director asks, " . . . . . ?" and follows with the order, " . . . . . ".

(stop-thrust) 14. If a fencer simply extends her arm during her opponent's attack she is making a . . . . . .

(loss of touch) 15. The penalty for crossing the rear limit of the strip with booth feet while retreating is . . . . . .

(point in line) 16. When a fencer has her arm extended and her point threatens her opponent's valid target, she is said to have . . . . . .

(double touch) 17. When there is no right of way and both fencers have touched, the decision should be . . . . . .

(no change) 18. When there is no right of way and both fencers have touched, the result to the score is . . . . . .

(raised hand) 19. The judge's signal to the director to call a halt is . . . . . .

(la belle) 20. The final touch in a three-all bout is called . . . . . .

III. DIRECTIONS: Choose the one best answer to the following statements.
Write the number of the answer selected in the space provided.

(3) 1. Fencer A extends in the inside line; Fencer B maintains a closed outside line. An appropriate attack for Fencer A would be:
1. Disengage lunge 2. One, two lunge
3. Beat disengage lunge

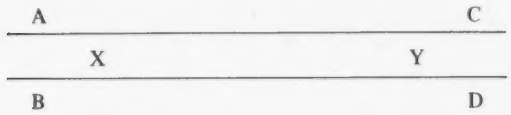
(3) 2. Fencer A attacks; Fencer B uses an opposition parry and makes no immediate attempt to riposte. An appropriate action for Fencer A would be:
1. Direct parry and riposte 2. Release pressure and recover
3. Counter-parry and riposte

(2) 3. Fencer A always attempts to parry as quickly as possible. Her parries usually conclude with a downward action. Against such an opponent one should use:
1. Beat attack
2. One, two attack
3. Direct attack

(3) 4. Fencer A attacks, Fencer B parries; Fencer A disengages, Fencer B parries. An appropriate action for Fencer A would be:
   1. Counter-parry and riposte
   2. Disengage riposte
   3. One, two riposte

(1) 5. Fencer A beats in the inside line, Fencer B involuntarily responds toward the beat. An appropriate attack for Fencer A would be:
   1. Beat disengage lunge
   2. Beat lunge
   3. Disengage beat lunge

IV. DIRECTIONS: The illustration below represents a fencing strip. The letters indicate the positions of judges and fencers. For questions #1 and #2 select the letters which will make the statements correct and write the selected letters in the space before the question.



(A, D) 1. Fencers X and Y are both right-handed. If only two judges are being used, those judges would stand at . . . . . and . . . . . .

(A, C) 2. Fencer X is right handed, Fencer Y is left-handed. If only two judges are being used, those judges would stand at . . . . . and . . . . . .

Directions for #3-#10: Select from the following list of possible decisions, the decision which will make the statement correct and write it in the space before the question.

Touch for X	No touch	Double touch
Touch for Y	Abstain	Foul

(Touch for X) 3. Fencer X attacks Fencer Y. When questioned by the director, Judge A and Judge B each say, "Touch". The director is convinced that the attack was foul. The director's decision should be:

(No Touch) 4. Fencer X attacks Fencer Y. When questioned by the director, Judge A and Judge B each say, "Touch". The director is convinced that the attack was foul. The director's decision should be:

(Touch-X) 5. Fencer X attacks Fencer Y. When questioned by the director, Judge A votes "Touch," Judge B abstains, the director votes, "No touch". The director's decision will be:

(Touch-Y) 6. Fencer X extends and lunges. As X lunges, Fencer Y simultaneously extends her arm. Judge A and Judge B each say, "Touch". Judges C and D say, "Foul". The director's decision will be:
Fencer X attacks Y, Y parries and ripostes. Judge A says, "No touch," Judge B abstains, the director has no opinion. Judge C says, "Touch," Judge D abstains, the director has no opinion. The director's decision will be:

(Touch-X) 7. The tip of the foil lands on Fencer Y's back shoulder.
The judge's vote should be:

(Touch-X) 8. The tip of the foil lands on the chest of Fencer Y, but the attack was with a bent arm. The judge's vote should be:

(Touch-X) 9. The tip lands on the bib of Y's mask. The judge's vote should be:

(Abstain) 10. There is a bend in Fencer X's foil but the tip of the foil is not visible to the judge. The judge's vote should be:

Bower Test of General Fencing Ability

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This test of general fencing ability can be used to obtain class ranking. It includes elements of attack and defense, speed, timing, and a degree of strategy. It is a round robin test, each participant being tested with all others, although a class may be divided into pools of six or seven to save time. Fencers with the highest number of wins are first, etc.

Materials Needed

Chalk, pencils, running scoresheets, one master scoresheet for each pool, a 3 x 5 inch card (or any 5 inch measure), and regulation fencing equipment.

Duties of the Participants

The class works in groups of threes with any number of three being tested at once. Thus a pool of six would have two groups of three each working at the same time.

The Defender is required to come on guard with her back foot against the wall. She has to defend herself against five attacks with any parry or parries she chooses. After five attacks, she changes places and becomes the attacker.

The Attacker has to determine her lunging distance by finding how far from the defender she can stand in a guard position and still reach the defender's target with a full lunge. When this distance is determined, the scorer draws a chalk "starting line" along the inner border of the attacker's rear foot. Another line is drawn five inches nearer the wall from the starting line. This is designated as the "foul line."

The attacker then has to come on guard with her back foot behind the starting line. She is required to make five attacks in her own time, each one beginning from behind the starting line. Any attack may be used, providing it is made with a continuous forward motion. This means that an attack, once begun, has to be continued.

There can be no false starts, although feints are allowed provided that they are a part of the attack.

At the conclusion of each attack, the rear foot has to be on the floor behind the foul line. This is to assure aproper lunge attack.

After five attacks, the attacker changes places with the opponent and becomes the defender. Two practice attacks may be made before scoring.

The Scorer marks the chalk lines for each attacker. She also keeps score on the running scoresheet which is supplied to each group of three. The scorer also makes sure that the rear foot of the attacker remains behind the foul line, and that the attack is continuous. She should call out scores as they are recorded.

Scoring

1. One point is awarded to the attacker for each attack which results in a valid hit before the parry is executed. The blade cannot be replaced after a parry or a miss. A hit has to be made with the tip of the point against the valid target.
2. One point is awarded to the defender for each parry which successfully deflects the attack so that the point does not land. If the blade lands on a foul area after being deflected from the target it is counted as a successful parry.
3. A zero is awarded if the attack fails to reach the target or lands on a foul area without being parried. If the attacker's foot passes over the foul line and the attacker is good, a zero is recorded. If a faulty attack is parried, the point is awarded to the defender.

Order of Testing. The sequences of tests is determined by the Order of Bouts as set forth in the AFLA Rules.

Master Scoresheets. One sheet for each pool should be retained by the test administrator. This should be an official AFLA scoresheet. Scores are transferred from running scoresheets to these to simplify in the evaluation of results.

Reliability for this test was determined from the correlation of scores resulting from two consecutive days of testing, using the same subjects in the same order on each day. Fifty-one students at the University of Southern California were tested. Reliability obtained by the Pearson Product-Moment method was found to be .821± .046.

Validity was obtained by comparing test results with results of round robin tournaments. Forty-eight students were tested in this

way. Students were divided into pools of five and six. The tournament was fenced during the thirteenth and fourteenth weeks of the students' first semester of fencing and the test was administered on the fifteenth week with the students competing against the same people in each case. Validity, as obtained by the Pearson Product Moment method of determining correlation, proved to be .802 ±.063.

RUNNING SCORESHEET

1. Place the number of each player in the second column as she is ready to begin the test. The number is taken from the fencer's position on the master scoresheet.
   a. The attacker's number should be entered on the first line for each test and the defender's number on the second line.
   b. After five attacks the first defender becomes the new attacker.
2. In the next five squares enter the *number of the scoring fencer* for each attack. In the example, the attacker, No. 6, scored first. The defender, No. 7, scored next. On the third attempt neither scored so an "0" was recorded.
3. Total the points for each fencer in the Total column, listing the player's number, then the total score. There is a possible 10 points for a fencer.

EXAMPLE

Test No.	Player No.	Trial Number 1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Total No.	Score
1	6	6	7	0	6	7	6	3
	7	6	7	7	7	0	7	5

Test No.	Player No.	Trial Number					Total	
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	No.	Score
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								

Criteria for Rating Selected Skills of Foil Fencing

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Development of Rating Scale

1. Basic techniques, and descriptive analysis of each, were selected according to authors of various fencing books.
2. A questionnaire was sent to members of the 1956-58 DGWS Fencing Committee for approval and/or suggestions on the order and analysis of skills.
3. The skills to be included and their analysis were compiled. Each item included was selected by a majority of the committee members.
4. Validation occurred by ranking the score of the rating scale against the jury of experts' rating of each skill on each subject.
5. A correlation was run between totaled judges' scores and the score received on the rating scale. The correlation was 0.8+.

Administration of Rating Scale

1. One student is tested at a time except when attacks and parries are tested.
2. A check is placed by the skill analysis if specific part is present.
3. A mark is placed beside good, fair, or poor. To receive good rating, no more than one part of the analysis should be lacking.
4. Number value is assigned each skill: 3 = good; 2 = fair; 1 = poor. These marks are totaled with a perfect score being 21.
5. Letter grades are assigned on this basis: A = above 1.5 standard deviations above mean. B = 0.5 to 1.5 standard deviations above mean. C = ± 0.5 standard deviations from mean. D = 0.5 to 1.5 standard deviations below mean. F = below 1.5 standard deviations from mean.

Letter grades: A = 21; B = 19-20; C = 16-18; D = 14-15; F = below 14. T scores: 21 = T score of 74; 20 = T score of 68; 19 = T score of 62; 18 = T score of 56; 17 = T score of 48; 16 = T score of 44; 15 = T score of 38; 14 = T score of 32; 13 = T score of 26.

Rating Scale For Beginning Fencing Skills

Directions

A. Check in the space provided each skill with a subjective rating of good, fair, or poor.

B. Use a check to indicate correct performance and a minus for incorrect performance on the breakdown of each skill (in the space provided).

C. Additional comments may be written in the space on the extreme right.

I. On Guard: Good___; Fair___; Poor___ . Comments on form performance

Still breakdown:

A. Foil arm
___1. Elbow, comfortable distance from waist
___2. Pommel, flat on wrist
___3. Hand, supinated
___4. Point, in line with opponent's eyes

B. Non-foil arm
___5. Upper arm parallel with floor
___6. Forearm at right angles
___7. Hand relaxed toward head

C. Upper body
___8. Foil side of body toward opponent
___9. Trunk erect, head toward opponent
___10. Hips tucked under

D. Lower extremities
___11. Feet at right angles
___12. Distance two foot lengths
___13. Right foot toward opponent
___14. Knees over insteps
___15. Right knee toward opponent

II. Advance: Good___; Fair___; Poor___ .

A. Lower extremities
___1. Right foot lift first, heel touches first
___2. Left foot one movement
___3. Both feet move close to floor, no sliding

III. Lunge: Good___; Fair___; Poor____.
A. Foil arm
___1. Extended shoulder high
___2. Hand supinated
B. Non-foil arm
___3. Arm straightened
___4. Palm turned up
C. Lower extremities
___5. Right foot forward, straight line toward opponent
___6. Right knee over instep, toward opponent
___7. Left foot flat on floor
___8. Left knee and leg straight

IV. Disengage: Good___; Fair___; Poor____.
___1. On guard position
___2. Foil arm extended
___3. Drop foil arm around opponent's bell guard in same movement as arm extension
___4. Lunge
___5. Movement continuous and done with fingers

V. Parry–Lateral: Good____; Fair____; Poor____.
___1. On guard position
___2. Hand half-supination throughout
___3. Middle of blade against opponent's middle
___4. Blade moved enough to cover line being attacked
___5. Hand level no change

VI. Parry–Counter: Good____; Fair____; Poor____.
___1. On guard position
___2. Circle made by finger action
___3. Small circle
___4. Last three fingers
___5. Counter parry quarte counterclockwise
___6. Counter parry sixte clockwise
___7. Hand level no change

VII. Riposte–Simple: Good___; Fair____; Poor____.
___1. On guard position
___2. Follows successful parry, no delay
___3. Arm extended if needed
___4. Lunge if needed

Officiating

Women as Fencing Officials

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Both in the United States and internationally, women have only recently been accepted as qualified officials for formal noncollegiate fencing competitions, and then only in the women's foil events. They are few in number – a much smaller proportion of the total female fencing population than one might expect. The most recently printed edition of the *Statutes of the International Fencing Federation* lists only one woman among Class 2 directors (a Bulgarian who is primarily an administrator) and none in the top category (Class 3). A few years ago, under a somewhat different system, the international list included such famous world champions as the late Karen Lachmann of Denmark, Ilona Elek of Hungary, and Irene Camber of Italy. There are women in the national roster of fencing officials in the United States, Australia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Poland, and the U.S.S.R.

Good officiating requires a sound knowledge of the competitive game, a mastery of the rules of competition, and a judicial temperament. I think it can be demonstrated that none of these qualities is the exclusive property of the masculine sex.

First, it would be pointed out that the quality of women's foil fencing cannot be measured solely by whether foilswomen can beat foilsmen; factors other than knowledge of the game affect the result. Actually, there have been times in fencing, as in tennis, when the difference in competitive quality was negligible. For example Helene Mayer in her prime could beat many of the best foilsmen in the world; and it was the consensus of experienced observers at the 1967 World Championships in Montreal that the technical quality of the fencing in the women's final had seldom been surpassed in recent male or female foil competition. Furthermore, it is not necessary to be a top-flight competitor to be an absolutely first-rate fencing judge or director. Many of the highest-rated international officials on the Class 3 list never reached top competitive rank in their countries. Conversely, an astonishingly large proportion of world and national champions never amounted to much as fencing officials. There are fencers who know the game thoroughly but lack the physical or

temperamental capacity to win gold medals; and there are excellent fencers who do not have the interest or the patience to become good officials.

The two skills, though related, are quite separate, yet they do have an important factor in common: There are no "natural" fencers, and there are no "natural" officials. One has to learn how to fence, and one has to learn to officiate.

I am inclined to think that the major reason why there are not more recognized women officials in fencing is that few of them ever go to the trouble of learning how to officiate. It is not possible in this brief article to suggest in detail a training program for good fencing officials, but the main points are the three to which reference has already been made:

1. *Acquire a thorough knowledge of the game*—e.g., read up on the theory of fencing; attend every competition possible and follow the actions of the best fencers so that there can be instant identification of the attack, parry, riposte, remise, counter-attack, etc.; observe carefully the handling of a formal bout by a competent president of jury, preferably in the company of an experienced official who can help analyze actions as they happen; and in general talk, breathe, and live fencing at every opportunity.

2. *Acquire a thorough knowledge of the rules*—e.g., read and reread the rules book; participate in various tests and quizzes given in judging schools and often published in such periodicals as *American Fencing;* and discuss moot or controversial points with experienced officials.

3. *Develop a judicial attitude toward officiating assignments* —e.g., train your mind to divorce itself from the identity of the competitors, looking only to an impersonal contestant on your left and an equally impersonal contestant on your right; remember that the overwhelming majority of officiating situations are basically simple and well defined, so that you must be letter-perfect in handling the commonplace before you can deal confidently with the rare, esoteric situation; volunteer for duty at any and all levels of competition as a means of serving your apprenticeship until your reputation brings the reward of assignment to the higher rounds; cultivate humility by realizing that the principal actors on the competitive stage are the fencers and not the officials; and exercise your functions with a calm authority, aloof from debate with the competitors, that inspires confidence in your decisions.

There are many excellent women judges in the state and federal systems of the United States. There is no reason why we should not have equally fine, judge-like, feminine officials in fencing.

Officiating for the Beginner

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It has frequently been said that it takes five years of fencing experience to make a good fencer, ten years to make a good judge, and fifteen years to make a good director. If such be true (there are those who say it takes longer), there is strong reason for teaching the beginning fencer something about judging and directing as soon as she is ready to face her opponent on the strip. All too often bouting is started with little or no instruction being given in the skills of conducting a bout. Nothing being said as to the how, what and why of officiating, judges (if any) lag along uncomprehendingly or are completely disinterested; and the so-called bout either ends up as a jab-all or drags on interminably because of the lack of direction which is often the case in beginning classes.

The advantages in learning officiating techniques are threefold:

First, for the individual herself, they help to develop leadership and quickness of decision. The fencer begins to learn to sort out the maze of thrusts, ripostes, disengages and remises of a complex bout and soon can begin to analyze and place in sequence the movements of the fencer. This in turn helps her to analyze her own bouting techniques and helps her to think more quickly when she in turn is fencing. And the discussions which invariably arise out of early efforts to judge and direct the bout help to develop a greater interest in the sport. In addition, as a spectator the fencer will have a greater appreciation of the function of the bout as a whole particularly if she has an opportunity to attend local tournaments in her area. Judging and directing give an awareness and feeling for the sport which cannot always be gleaned from bouting alone, and moreover, it is fun.

Second, a jury is indispensable to the good conduct of the bout itself. Without a jury the bout may lag or get out of control; fencing may become wild and corps-a-corps too frequent; touches may be called incorrectly or not at all. From a fencer's viewpoint there is no real bout without the jury, for it adds the touch of officiality to the winning or losing of the bout. In the heat of battle it is difficult, or almost impossible, for the fencers themselves to determine whether a given touch was good or flat, directly foul or parried foul, or who hit first if both fencers have hit somewhere. To truly determine who gained the point and who is the eventual victor, an impartial and

well-trained jury is indispensable; and to have a well-trained jury, instruction must be started at an early stage.

Third, judges who have been taught the basic fundamentals of judging and directing are an asset in their own classes and to the fencing community as a whole. Because of their understanding of the function of the bout they can perform such duties as timing and scoring in the course of the tournament and can, after practice in their own classes, help to judge the local tournaments. It is quite a burden on participating fencers to have to judge their own tournaments, and extra judges are always in demand. It should be emphasized that to be a good judge one does not necessarily have to be an outstanding fencer. Needless to say, since it takes so long, comparatively, to develop an accurate sense of timing for judging and directing, the sooner it is taught, the better.

The time factor should not, however, discourage fencing instructors from making an effort to teach officiating. It may look like a difficult or impossible undertaking in a beginning group, but basically, it is simple. Most teachers, of necessity, devote some time to the rules of fencing in their class programs, and officiating logically follows the rules discussion. A few suggestions are included here for the convenience of teachers who have not heretofore included officiating in their fencing program, or who have tended to slight it as being of little importance.

Since officiating is an incident of bouting, it should be started at approximately the same time. However, before the student takes her position on the strip as a member of the jury, the following points should have been covered in class discussion:

1. **The valid target.** Emphasize that a good touch can be made on the back and on the neck. Also point out that the hip line may be difficult to determine and is not necessarily delineated by the fencer's jacket or other protective covering.

2. **What constitutes a "good" touch.** Emphasize that the tip or point of the foil must hit the valid target. If the point hits and then slides, or if the point is parried onto valid target, it is still a good touch. However, a blade which is laid against the target, squeezed or pressed against the target, or one which is pulled back across the target, does not constitute a good touch.

3. **What constitutes a foul touch.** Emphasize that because a direct foul invalidates subsequent actions it must be called immediately. A point which lands *directly* on other than valid target area constitutes a foul touch and stops the action. A point which is parried onto the body and is not on the valid target area is a *parried* foul and does not stop the action.

4. **The function of the director.** Point out that the director is in charge of the bout; she calls the participants on guard, asks if they

are ready, and orders play to begin. She keeps the bout under control, calls corps-a-corps if it occurs, issues warnings if fencers become too rough, and prevents the contestants from becoming wild and uncontrolled by calling a propitious halt and once again starting them from an on guard position. At the same time she should keep the bout moving smoothly and quickly. The director should concentrate on the ensemble of plays in order to be able to reconstruct the action, to determine right of way. She stops the play by the command "halt." No action of the fencers is good prior to the command of "play" nor after the command "halt." The director awards the touches.

5. **The function of the judges.** Emphasize that the judges assist in determining whether or not there was a touch. Their only duty is to raise their hands to get the director's attention as soon as they see a touch on valid or invalid target. Upon questioning by the director they should answer a definite "yes" if they see a touch, "no" if they saw no touch, or "abstain" if they have no opinion or are in doubt. Judges should be encouraged to take a stand and not to abstain too frequently.

6. **The voting procedure.** Point out that in deciding whether or not there was a touch each judge has one vote and the director has one and a half votes. If one judge abstains, or the two judges, disagree, the director will thus have the deciding vote.

Many of the foregoing points can be brought out from time to time as the class progresses and prior to actual bouting. Much of it will undoubtedly be covered in a rules discussion, and it will be helpful if the instructor is herself familiar with the A.F.L.A. rules.

As soon as feasible, and preferably at about the same time that bouting is begun, the teacher should set up an actual bouting situation with four judges and a director. It would be of considerable help if a demonstration bout by more experienced fencers could be arranged, but if such is not possible the instructor should act as the director at first so that the students have an idea as to what is expected of them. When the jury members have taken their positions and before beginning the bout, the following points should be explained:

1. **Which target to watch.** Attention is focused on the fencer opposite the judge and not on the near fencer behind whom the judge is stationed.

2. **Where to stand in relation to the competing fencer.** Judges should be at least three feet behind the near competing fencer and three feet to her side in order to avoid accidents and not to distract either the fencer or the director. However, if the near fencer in some manner cuts off the judge's view, the latter should move into a position where she can see, but never in front of the near fencer.

3. **How to move with the play.** The judges should move forward and backward as the fencers advance or retreat so as to maintain at

all times the same distance with relation to the fencers as that which they had when the bout began.

4. **How to gain director's attention.** The judge should raise her hand—not call out to the director. However, if the director has not seen the judge's hand go up, the judge should call "halt" before the phrase continues much further. If one judge has an opinion different from the other judge and the director fails to recognize both judges, the judge who has been overlooked should speak up at once. Each judge must make up her own mind and not let herself be influenced by the decision of the other judge.

5. **Manner.** The judges must be alert and make their decisions quickly. They may stand relaxed, but should not slouch. They must pay close attention to the target they are watching.

After each touch the instructor can answer questions that may be puzzling the judges or class members. As soon as the judging procedure seems to be fairly clear—at most three or four bouts—the role of the director should be clarified, with particular emphasis on the following:

1. **Position.** The director should stand about thirteen feet from the competing fencers, equidistant between them, and preferably facing the scorers. However, when there are two left-handed fencers she should place herself on the open side of the fencers. She must move as the fencers move so as to remain at an equal distance from the contestants at all times.

2. **Attitude.** The director must be alert, speak with quiet authority, and should pay close attention to the bout. She should stand erect, and not sit down or lean against the wall or apparatus. Her demeanor sets the tone of the bout.

3. **What to watch.** The director should attempt to see which fencer initiated the attack, so that the time of all other actions can be determined and the touch awarded to the fencer who properly had right of way. It may be of some help to the beginner to suggest that she concentrate on both blades and on the forearm of the fencer whose open side is toward the director. Beginning fencers frequently carry a phrase no farther than a counterattack or continuation which will make it somewhat easier for the beginning director to analyze. The analysis should be mental, not verbal; but if it is of help during the learning process to vocally call the sequence of actions, no harm will be done.

4. **Procedure.** If the director sees a judge's hand go up, or though no hand goes up the director thinks she saw a touch, she should call "halt" immediately. Each judge should be asked whether or not something occurred on the target she was watching. No particular language is required upon asking the judge, but "good touch?" or "Did you see a hit?" is usual.

In teaching officiating there is no substitute for actual student participation, and the more often students are given the opportunity to try, the faster they will learn. In a busy class schedule where time is restricted, some instructors may feel that any instruction in officiating is too time-consuming. However, once such instruction is given it becomes more easily worked into the schedule; and the instructor may be rewarded by finding that time is actually saved in the long run by the fencers being able to conduct their own bouts, leaving the teacher free to give more individual help where it is needed.

A Practical Test for Fencing Directors

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As interest and skill in fencing increase throughout the colleges and universities, so does the need for qualified officials in both standard and electrically-scored events. While electrical scoring eliminates the need for judges, it adds to the burden of the director, who must make all decisions relative to the bout without assistance (except that of whether a touch has arrived or not).

Perhaps a practical examination may be part of the answer to the dilemma of finding qualified officials for intramural, extramural, and collegiate fencing tournaments. The formulation of an examination such as the one which follows may lead to officiating clinics and ratings as in other DGWS sports. A competent rating panel would have to be formed if the need became extensive, but as a start, why not take a close look at this proposed exam and use it in your classes or at some competitive meets on a trial basis?

The rating form is patterned after the DGWS Basketball and Volleyball Rating Sheets. Two people can be rated on the same sheet, and a minimum score of at least 72 should be obtained for adequate knowledge. (See sample form, page 115.)

On the Rating Form in No. 1-A, the raters mark with a check (√) the number of correct, wrong, or missed decisions. This should be evaluated during a minimum of 3 bouts. To obtain the score for 1-A, multiply the number of correct decisions by 35 points, the total maximum points possible. Divide this product by the total numb. of all decisions areas in 1-A. Example: 6 correct decisions times 3. points possible is 210 points. Divide 210 points by 8 (total of al decisions in 1-A). The score for 1-A is 26.

No. 1-B is concerned with the general handling of the bout, including voice, manner, decisiveness, and control of the bout; a poor to excellent rating, from 0-20 points, is given.

No. 2 is self-explanatory. Quick reactions are imperative to good officiating.

No. 3 requires the official to follow the bout closely by moving with the bout, beside the strip line, with concentration and agility.

No. 4 requires the director to apply the correct vocabulary to describe the action and therefore make the correct decision.

FENCING DIRECTOR'S PRACTICAL EXAMINATION

Judge ..... Date .....

Theory Grade	Practical Grade	Theory Grade	Practical Grade
Examinee	Rating	Examinee	Rating

Earned Score	Checking & Comments		Max. Score	Checking & Comments	Earned Score
		1. JUDGING A. Handling of Decisions	35		
		Correct Decision		✓✓✓✓✓✓	
		Wrong Decision		✓	
		Indecision			
		Missed Decision		✓	
		B. Confidence, manner, voice, decisiveness, and control of bout. Excellent 17-20; Good 13-16; Fair 9-12; Poor 0-8	20		
		2. REACTION TIME	6		
		3. POSITIONING BESIDE STRIP AND CONCENTRATING ON PLAY	5		
		4. KNOWLEDGE AND APPLICATION OF BASIC TERMS OF ACTION	5		
		5. GENERAL INFORMATION			
		Knows target area (fair and foul)	5		
		Knows stripmarkings and dimensions	3		
		Knows structure and purpose of jury in standard foil	5		
		6. SCORING	10		
		Team			
		Individual			
		7. TIMING	6		
	Total		100	Total	

No. 5 requires the official to demonstrate a basic knowledge of fencing so that correct decisions can be made. This area is an informal questioning period concerning target area, hits by tip, side of blade, etc., as well as valid and invalid target, strip markings and dimensions, and structure, purpose, and voting decision of the jury.

No. 6 requires participant to write a score sheet for a minimum of three bouts and to finalize the score sheet at the end of a pool, both in team and individual pools.

No. 7 requires each participant to time a minimum of three bouts in the correct manner.

This rating sheet has been used with success over the past year and a half by Simon Hernandez, Fencing Director with the Portland Parks and Recreation Bureau, Portland, Oregon, in obtaining classification for a Fencing Cadre set up by him.

Fencing with Electrical Foils

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At the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, history was made many times by outstanding feats of athletic prowess. Sports records were broken, new abilities demonstrated. Women and men alike proved that we have not yet reached our maximum capacity for athletic achievement. One of the attainments publicized very little outside the fencing salles was the official use of *electrified weapons* and *touch-signaling apparatus* for the women's and men's foil fencing events—from preliminary to final rounds. This marked as *fait accompli* a new era in the development of the historic art of swordplay, and the commencement of a period which will see new techniques and incredibly high attainments with respect to speed, cunning, and accuracy in directing the point.

Some of you have already seen electrical-foil equipment. Some may have even fenced with it. Without exception, *properly adjusted apparatus* is glowingly praised by all familiar with its *raison d'etre.* To understand and appreciate its purpose, let us review the organization of the bout when the nonelectrical, or common foil is used as the official weapon. We have, of course, the combatants equipped with weapons, gloves, masks, white jackets, white breeches secured below the knees or white short skirts, and fencing sneakers. The combat is confined to a field of play referred to as a strip, approximately 6 feet 7 inches wide and 39 feet 5 inches long. The fencers, to begin the contest for each new point, are placed 6 feet 7 inches from the center line.

To use a cliché, *the hand is often quicker than the eye.* By that we mean that a foil can be "flicked" about so quickly that the eye of the untrained observer can scarely follow it. Even the skilled observer, though she may be an experienced fencer, usually has difficulty watching the tip of an attacking foil and knowing accurately whether or not the point has actually touched the opponent. If it *has* touched the opponent, exactly on what "spot" of the anatomy? Because the foil is—theoretically, of course—exclusively a weapon with which one combatant attempts to "stick" the other (as opposed to "cut"), did the point *graze* the opponent, was it *laid on,* or did it actually arrive with a forward motion, as though *penetrating?* Fencing rules are quite explicit as to how a *touch* must be made.

But, as we said above, *the hand is often quicker than the eye;* so quick is it, in fact, that the fencers themselves cannot always be positive as to whether or not their attacks have failed or succeeded—whether or not they have made an awardable touch. Therefore, the well-known *jury* is appointed. In principle, jury members are selected because they are competent observers; impartial in their attitude; free of personal prejudice with respect to team, school, club, or individual contestant; keen of eye; impossible to distract for even an instant; resolute; and equipped with an excellent knowledge of the game.

In practice, though no one is to blame, the jury is usually composed of teammates who are "cooling off" from the previous bout in which they have just eagerly fought for touches for their respective schools or clubs; or possibly some interested non-participating fencers who show up and volunteer for "jury duty." Usually, he or she is an alumnus or alumni of one of the competing schools, or a friend of someone in the contest. Can one do more than hope for impartiality?

True, there are four judges and each has equal voting power. True, there is a director of the jury with broad authority to see that the game is properly conducted. True, too, women fencers change sides at the midway point of the bout (after two touches have been scored against an individual), giving them the same "breaks" with the judges. But fencing is designed as a contest between individuals, who may be part of a team. The outcome of the contest should depend solely on the skills of the contestants and not at all on the number of "human errors" and "doubts" exhibited by the jury. Electrical fencing is a major step in the direction of eliminating "doubt" and partiality.

To fence electrical foil, the fencer dresses herself exactly as for the common foil. However, an additional exterior vest is worn. It is made with metallic threads to give it high electrical conductivity, and is tailored to constitute the valid target area. All other areas (nonconductive) are considered to be *invalid.* The weapon is different, too. It has a *plunger-type* blunt point, instead of the stationary blunt point of the common foil. This point is wired. The wire lies in a narrow groove which runs the full length of the blade, and terminates at a connector behind the guard of the weapon.

A *body cord* is worn by the fencer. It is run up the sleeve of the weapon-arm of the fencer, across the back (under the clothing) and reappears at the base line of the uniform jacket. Connector plugs are fitted at both ends of the cord; one connects with the weapon, the other to a *reel* of springwound flexible cable usually mounted at the end of the strip. (The reels are identical with those used for the épée.) From the connector plug at the backend of the body cord, there is a short length of wire with a spring-type clip at its free end.

This clip is gripped onto the metallic jacket to provide the electrical connection to the touch-signaling apparatus.

No *judges* are used. The term "president (or director) of the jury" is changed instead, to the "director of the bout." Otherwise, the game is conducted in the usual manner with "On Guard," "Ready!" "Fence!" as the commands (also "Halt!") for stopping the action. When a hit on *valid* target area is made with sufficient force (more than 500 grams) and with a forward motion so as to depress the plunger-point, a *colored light* goes on and a bell or buzzer is sounded by the touch-signaling apparatus. When the point is depressed against *invalid* (nonconducting) surface, a *white light* goes on and the same buzzer or bell is rung.

In June 1957, the *Committee for Electrical Signaling* of the *Federation Internationale d'Escrime*, wrote a new set of technical rules concerning the performance and electrical specifications of weapons and apparatus. The requirements are particularly stringent with respect to speed: the apparatus must signal a touch when the plunger point is depressed for a time interval as brief as five milliseconds (1/200th of a second). The electrical sensitivity requirements are such that, with foil, reels, and apparatus conforming to the F.I.E. rules, the element of "doubtful" touches is virtually eliminated. (Touches are signaled as being either *valid* or *invalid*. There is no signal for *abstention*.)

In the manner of setting up the electrical foil bout, contestants and officials, the F.I.E. rules are explicit. It is required that, for official F.I.E. championships, Olympic games, world championships, and important international events (for women and men), electrical weapons and apparatus be utilized. Metallic coverings (neutralizing mats) for the field of play are also used.* The director places himself so that he is in full view of the field and so that he has an unrestricted view of the fencers. The fencer called first comes to the end of the strip at the director's right. In the case of a bout between a right-handed and a left-handed fencer, they position themselves so that their chests are in the director's full view. This facilitates the director's complex task and high responsibility for accurately observing the play. In electrical foil, the fencers do not change sides at the midway point because of the delays that would be incurred in disconnecting, reconnecting, and retesting. The apparatus is placed so that it is also in full view of the director on the opposite side of the strip. It is required that no one other than the operator of the

*In competitions other than official F.I.E. events for championships where *neutralizing mats* are not used, two "Ground" Judges are to be appointed to observe whether or not the point strikes the strip causing the invalid signal to actuate. Each Judge has the power of 1 vote, the Director, 1½ votes.

apparatus, timekeepers, and scorekeepers use the table on which is installed the apparatus.

When fencers come to the strip with their equipment (which has been previously inspected and approved by the official technicians), they "hook up": weapon to body cord, body cord to reel. Then they in turn, under the supervision of the director of the bout, test their personal equipment. With masks on, they (1) touch weapon-point against the opponent's guard, (2) against invalid surface, (3) against valid target, and then make a "double-touch" to make sure that both will register. If all appears to be in good order, the bout is started by the director's orders.

The apparatus concentrates on its job of replacing the four body judges and no one can distract it. Who can accuse a box of electrical apparatus of partiality or prejudice? You can scowl at it! Glare at it! Shout at it, if the director will permit! But you cannot intimidate the electrical foil. You've got to *fence* to win touches!

Fencing Glossary

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Note: "I" indicates the Italian term; "F" indicates the French term.

ABSTAIN–Refrain from voting by a judge.

ABSENCE OF BLADE–When the blades are not in contact.

ACTIONS ON THE BLADE–Principally, the beat, pressure, opposition, glide, bind, and envelopment; a preparation for attack.

ADVANCE–Steps taken to close the distance between opponents.

AFLA–Amateur Fencers League of America.

ATELIER–Workshop.

ATTACK–A forward movement of the weapon, which constitutes an imminent offensive threat to the opponent's valid target.

ATTACK ON THE MARCH (F. Attaque en Marchant)–An advance combined with a lunge.

AVOIDANCE (F. Dérobement)–Evading the opponent's attempt to beat or take the blade.

BALESTRA–Jump forward combined with the lunge on attack.

BARRAGE–Fence-off between two or more fencers for a qualifying position.

BEAT (I. Battuta, F. Battement)–Striking the oppinent's blade as preparation for attack.

BIB–Padding fastened to the mask to protect the neck.

BIND (I. Legamento, F. Liement)–Preparation for attack by carrying the opponent's blade diagonally across from high to low line or vice versa; the blade descrives a half-circle.

BOUT COMMITTEE (F. Directoire Technique)–Organizers of the competition.

BREAKING GROUND–Retreating.

BROKEN TIME—Deliberately pausing between two movements which normally follow each other.

CADENCE—The rhythm in which a sequence of movements is made.

CENTRAL GUARD—When the hand is placed between two lateral lines.

CHANGE-BEAT—An attack on the blade made by disengaging and beating in the line opposite the original line.

CHANGE OF ENGAGEMENT—Engaging the opponent's blade in a new line.

COMPOUND (COMPOSITE) ATTACK—An attack made in two or more movements.

CORPS A CORPS (clinch)—When two fencers are touching so that they cannot wield their foils.

COULE—Glide.

COUNTER-ATTACKS—The time-hit and stop-hit.

COUNTER-DISENGAGEMENT—Action of deceiving a change of engagement or a counter-parry.

COUNTER-PARRY (I. Parate di Contro, F. Contre)—A circular parry which carries the opponent's blade to the opposite line.

COUNTER-RIPOSTE—Offensive action following the parry of a riposte.

COUNTER-TIME OR COUNTER-TEMPO (I. Controtempo, F. Contretemps)—Second intention; drawing the opponent's stop-hit or time-hit, parrying it, and riposting from it.

COUPE—Cut-over.

COVERED—Position of the foil which closes the line of engagement.

CROSS (F. Croise)—Taking the opponent's blade from high to low line on the same side as the engagement.

CUT-OVER (I. Coupe, F. Coupe)—Disengagement made by passing over the opponent's blade.

DELAYED ATTACK (I. Tempo Perduto, F. Temps Perdu)—A composite attack during which a "change of pace" causes a definite break in the continuity of the offensive movements.

DEROBEMENT–Action of the defender who is "in line" to escape the attempt of the attacker to take the blade.

DETACHMENT–A parry which by its crispness leaves the blade immediately after it has met it.

DEVELOPMENT–The extension of the arm and the lunge.

DIGGING–Making an angle with the foil and arm by moving the hand out and the point in to the target, when returning.

DIRECT–An attack or riposte made in the line of engagement.

DIRECTOR–President of the jury.

DISENGAGEMENT (I. Cavazione, F. Degagement)–Moving the blade from the line of engagement to the opposite line.

DISPLACED TARGET–Substituting invalid target for good target by arm or body movements.

DOUBLE (F. double)–A feint disengage, followed by a disengage in the same line deceiving the counter-parry.

DOUBLE HIT (I. in Contro, F. Coup Double)–Simultaneous hits with one fencer at fault.

DOUBLE PRISE DE FER–A succession of takings of the blade.

DOUBTFUL TOUCH–Decision by the director to annul the action when there is no majority vote.

ENGAGEMENT–Crossing of the blades.

ENVELOPMENT (I. Trasporto di Ferro)–Taking the opponent's blade and describing a circle to return to the line of engagement without losing contact.

EPEE (I. Spada de Duello, F. Epée)–The dueling sword.

FALSE ATTACK (I. Falso Attacco, F. Fausse Ataque)–An offensive movement which is not intended to score.

FEINT (I. Finta, F. Feinte)–An offensive movement made to resemble an attack in order to draw a reaction from the opponent.

FENCING TIME OR TEMPO (F. Temps d'escrime)–The time to perform one simple fencing action.

FIE–Federation Internationale d'Escrime.

FINAL MOVEMENT (of the comprosite attack)–Last forward motion of the blade immediately resulting in a hit or constituting the last continuous attempt to touch.

FIRST COUNTER RIPOSTE–The attacker's first riposte.

FLECHE–An attack made by running instead of lunging.

FOIBLE–The half of the blade nearest the point.

FOIL (I. Fioretto, F. Flueret)–The basic practice weapon.

FOOT CALL (I. Battuta di Piede, F. Appel du Peid)–Stamping the foot twice to signal the director that the fencer wishes to stop the bout.

FORTE–The half of the blade nearest the guard; strong.

GAINING GROUND–Stepping forward.

GLIDE (I. Filo, F. Coulé)–Pressing and sliding down the opponent's blade during the attack.

GRIP–The part of the handle which is held; also, the manner in which it is held.

GUARD OR BELL GUARD–The portion of the hilt designed to protect the hand.

HIT–Touch or score on valid target with the point of the weapon.

INDIRECT–A simple attack or riposte made in another line.

INFIGHTING–When contestants have their bodies or guards in contact.

INQUARTATA–A side-step with the rear foot away from the line of attack, used to evade the opponent's attack in place of a parry; used with a stop-hit.

INVITATION (I. Invito, F. Invite)–Deliberate, exaggerated opening up of a line to encourage the opponent to attack in that line.

JUDGES–Those whose duty it is to watch for hits and assist the director.

JURY–Composed of a president (director) and four judges.

LA BELLE–Score is tied.

LINES–Theoretical division of the target corresponding to the fencing positions.

LUNGE (I. Affondo, F. Fente)–Extension of the body and legs used to reach the opponent.

MARTINGALE—A leash that keeps the weapon loosely attached to the hand.

MATERIALITY—The decision made by a judge as to the existence or nonexistence of a touch.

MEASURE—Distance which a fencer keeps in relations to his opponent; lunge-distance.

NFCAA—National Fencing Coaches Association of America.

OCTAVE—Eight; low outside line of the target.

OFF TARGET—Touch on invalid target.

ON GUARD—The position of the arms, body, and feet adopted when prepared for a bout.

ONE-TWO AND ONE-TWO-THREE—Two or three consecutive disengages during the attack.

ORTHOPAEDIC GRIP—The term for a handle moulded to the shape of the fingers.

PARRY (I. Parata, F. Parade)—A defensive action made with the blade to deflect an attack.

PASSATA SOTTO—Backward lunge and drop to the floor on the left hand; used with a stop-hit.

PHRASE (F. Phrase d'armes)—Continual play without any pause in the cadence of the bout.

PISTE—Limited area within which the fencers compete; strip.

PLASTRON—Sleeveless half-jacket.

POINT IN LINE—Defensive threat used to compel the attacker to execute a preliminary action on the defender's blade under the rules of the "right of way."

POINTE D'ARRET—Point used on an electrical foil.

POMMEL—The piece of metal screwed to the end of the hilt to lock the parts of the weapon together and to balance the blade.

POOL—Tournament term where several fencers are assigned to fence each other in round robin fashion.

PREPARATION FOR ATTACK—A blade, body, or foot movement made prior to launching the attack.

PRESIDENT—The director or referee in a fencing bout.

PRESSURE–A preparation for attack made by pressing on the opponent's blade.

PRESSURE GLIDE–Sharp and continually increasing pressure on the opponent's blade as the attacker thrusts and lunges.

PRIME–One; high inside line of the target.

PRINCIPLE OF DEFENSE–Opposition of the forte of the blade to the foible of opponent's blade.

PRISE DE FER–Taking of the blade.

PROGRESSIVE ATTACK–Method of executing the various movements of a compound attack to cut the time and distance to a minimum.

QUARTE–Four; high inside line of the target.

QUINTE–Five; low inside line of the target.

REDOUBLEMENT–Renewal of the attack while on the lunge, comprising one or more movements of the blade.

REPLACEMENT–Remise.

REMISE–Renewal of the attack while on the lunge by replacing the point on the target in the same line without withdrawing the arm.

REPRISE–Renewal of the attack preceded by a return to guard.

RETREAT–Steps taken to increase the distance between opponents.

RIGHT OF WAY–The right to attack secured by extending the arm or parrying an attack.

RIPOSTE–Offensive action which follows a successful parry.

SABER–The cut-and-thrust weapon.

SALLE D'ARMES–Fencing school.

SECONDARY ATTACKS–Attacks made immediately following a first attack (remise, redouble, and reprise).

SECOND COUNTER RIPOSTE– Defender's second riposte.

SECOND INTENTION (I. Seconde Intenzione, F. Deusieme Intention)–A premeditated attack made after a false attack has provoked a riposte which the attacker may then parry and score on the counter-riposte.

SECONDE—Two; low outside line of the target.

SEMI-CIRCULAR PARRY—A parry during which the blade describes a half-circle from high to low line or vice versa.

SEPTIME (Septieme)—Seven; low inside line of the target.

SIMPLE ATTACK—An attack made with one movement, whether direct or indirect (thrust, single disengage, and cut-over).

SIMPLE PARRY—Direct movement of the blade in a horizontal or lateral plane to deflect or block the attacker's blade.

SIMULTANEOUS ACTION (Tempo Commune)—Simultaneous hits where neither fencer is at fault.

SIXTE—Six; high outside line of the target.

STOP-THRUST or STOP-HIT (I. Botta in tempo, F. Coupe d'arret)—A counteroffensive action made on an opponent's attack in an attempt to score before the attacker's final movement has begun.

STRIP (F. Piste)—The part of the field of play within which a bout takes place.

TAKING THE BLADE (I. Presa di ferro, F. Prise de Fer)—Preparation for attack by deflecting and controlling the opponent's blade.

TIERCE—Three; high outside line of the target.

TIME-HIT—Counter-offensive action which anticipates and intercepts the final line of the opponent's attack and covers in that line.

TROMPEMENTS—Offensive blade movements which deceive the opponent's parries.

WARNING LINES—Lines drawn one meter from the rear limits of the strip, at which fencers are warned that they are nearing the rear limit.

VALIDITY—The decision made by the director on awarding touches according to the rules of "right of way" or time.

Sports Guides and Official Rules Committee Interest Indicator

The SGOR Committee is endeavoring to broaden its base of personnel and to strengthen its services to *Guide* readers. The purpose of this form is to offer readers an opportunity to join us in meeting this need. Please complete this form and send it to the SGOR Associate Chairman-elect, whose name and address appear on page 10.

Name _____

Professional Address _____

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1. Check the Sport Committee(s) which would be of interest to you:

____ Aquatics	____ Field Hockey	____ Softball
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____ Basketball	____ Lacrosse	____ Track and Field
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____ Fencing	____ Riding	____ Winter Sports
	____ Soccer	

2. Would you like to serve as a member of a Sports Guide Committee of your interest? ___ Yes ___ No
3. Would you consider submitting an article to a Guide Committee as a prospective author? ___ Yes ___ No
   Possible topic or title _____
4. Can you suggest topics for articles which you would like to have included in future *Guides?* (Please indicate sport.) _____
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5. Are there others whom you would recommend for consideration as possible committee members or authors? Please indicate below. (Use additional paper, if necessary.)

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